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THE
LIVES
OF THE
ENGLISH AND FOREIGN
REFORMERS.

BY WILLIAM GILPIN, M.A.

PREBENDARY OF SALISBURY, AND VICAR OF
BOLDRE, IN NEW FOREST.

A NEW EDITION.

.....

IN TWO VOLUMES,

VOL. II.

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THE
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ENGLISH AND FOREIGN
HISTORIANS.

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THE
LIFE
OF
ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.

SECTION I.

THOMAS CRANMER was born at Aslacton, in Nottinghamshire, on the second of July, 1489. His father was a gentleman of small fortune; but the head of a family which had long lived in reputation in those parts. He was a lover of country diversions; and seems to have given his son an early taste for them.

The circumstances indeed of Mr. Cranmer's youth were not such, as usually usher in the life of a scholar. No man could manage a pack of hounds better; or handle the long-bow with more dexterity; or with the cross-bow take a surer aim. In horsemanship he so excelled, that after he was an archbishop, he scrupled not to ride the roughest horse in his stables.

But amusements with him were only relaxations. He gave himself up to study with equal eagerness; and his proficiency in country diversions shewed merely the versatility of his genius. The experiment, however, is dangerous; and the example not

to be followed by those, who are not well assured they have his strength of parts, and steadiness of temper to secure them from an extreme.

At the usual age Mr. Cranmer was sent to Cambridge; which was not then the seat of the muses. Schoolmen were the classics of that age; and nothing was heard from the chairs either of science, or religion, but what would have inspired an improved mind with disgust. This solemn trifling, which was then called learning, engaged Mr. Cranmer at least ten years.

About the year 1520 Martin Luther began first to draw the attention of mankind. Many reformers, before his day, particularly Wicliff, Huss, and Jerome of Prague, at different periods, had seen, and exposed with great acuteness, and strength of argument, the corruptions of the church of Rome. But it pleased God to use these inquisitive minds only as the dawning of that day, which he intended gradually to open. The corruptions of the church therefore having not yet received any effectual check, continued to spread; and, in the days of Luther, had grown to an enormous height. Venality, and rapacity were the reigning characteristics of the sovereign pontiff; and of that band of ecclesiastics, who retained under him. The very idea of religion was lost; except where it was necessary to uphold some parading ceremonies of the church; which were all the remains now left of Christianity. Morals were never thought of; and so far were the ruling powers from being hurt by the scandalous lives of the clergy, that they invented every method to exempt them from the jurisdiction of all courts, except their own. In them, every trespass found the gentlest treatment. An easy fine would satisfy even for murder.

Nor is it surprising, that the inferior clergy should lay aside all decency of manners, when they looked up to such pontiffs, as had long filled St. Peter's chair; particularly Alexander VI. and Julius II.

Even Leo X. flattered by the wits of the age, as the revivor, and patron of arts, and letters, though an elegant prince, was a detestable ecclesiastic *.

We need not wonder therefore, if so complex a system of corruption, as the Roman hierarchy appears to have been, at that time, needed little developing. Luther's doctrines spread rapidly through Germany: and though it was the single corruption of indulgences, which gave the first impulse to this disgust; yet from one error the minds of men presently passed to another; and the tenets of Luther were eagerly embraced, not only by the lower classes of people; but even by some of the princes of the empire; particularly by the elector of Saxony, one of the best, and by his sufferings shewn to be, one of the most magnanimous, princes of his time.

But though the ardent, and intrepid spirit of Luther had thus awakened a great part of Germany from its lethargy; yet his opinions found their way but leisurely into other parts of Europe. In England they were received with great caution. Serious men began to see the corruptions of the clergy; but they were afraid to question the infallibility of the pope. They were convinced of the propriety of seeking truth in the bible: but examined with great timidity the doctrines it contained.

Indeed, as far as appears, the writings of Erasmus introduced the first idea of systematic reformation in England. This reformer was a man of a very different temper from Luther: and yet in his way perhaps he contributed as much to discountenance the corruptions of the Romish church.

Luther, fearless in the path of truth, was animated, rather than daunted, by opposition. Erasmus, cau-

* They who wish to see the causes, which advanced the reformation, drawn out at length, may find them detailed with great perspicuity and elegance in the life of Charles V. by Dr. Robertson. Vol. II. page 147, oct. ed.

tious, and respectful to authority, shrank from danger; and sought truth only in the regions of tranquillity. Luther, in vehement language, talked of extirpating error, root and branch.—Erasmus wished only to open the eyes of men; and to leave them by degrees to reform themselves: he satisfied himself with exposing what was wrong; but did not presume to point out what was right. Luther's opposition ran ever in the form of fierce invective, or serious argument. Erasmus, though always in earnest, chose commonly to clothe his sentiments in ridicule. Luther was remarkable for the boldness of his measures; and a course of intrepid action: while Erasmus, trusting to his pen, never ventured abroad as the champion of religion; but defended it from his closet: and the art of printing getting then into use, his opinions soon made their way into the different parts of Europe.

Thus it happened, through the providence of God, that these two men, though in different ways, were equally adapted to the work of reformation. If Luther were the more spirited reformer on the spot; Erasmus was better qualified to make proselytes at a distance. If Luther's rough, and popular address were better suited to the multitude; the polished style, and elegant composition of Erasmus, found readier access to the gentleman, and the scholar.

The works of this celebrated writer began to be received in England at the time, when Mr. Cranmer was a student at Cambridge; and all men, who pretended to genius, learning, or liberality of sentiment, read them with avidity. To the general scholar, they opened a new idea—that of thinking for himself; and to the student in divinity, they pointed out the Scriptures as the only source of religious truth. The sophistry of the schools began apace to lose credit; and the universities soon produced ingenious men, who thought they could not employ their time better, than in studying the naked text of the Scriptures,

which at length drew on a freedom of inquiry. These students were commonly known by the name of Scripturists.

Mr. Cranmer ranked himself very early in this class of men; and with great assiduity applied to the study of the Scriptures. The more he studied, the more enlightened he grew: he daily saw more reasons for rejecting the false aids, in which he confided; and began to entertain many doubts, and suspicions, which he yet kept to himself.

His mode of study was calculated for improvement, rather than for ostentation. He read few books; but made himself a thorough master of those, he did read. A general scholar he thought another name for a superficial one. His character as a student, is thus marked by one of his biographers. "In percurrendis, conferendisque scriptorum judiciis, tardus quidem lector, sed vehemens erat observator. Sine calamo nunquam ad scriptoris cujusquam librum accessit: ita tamen ut memoriam interim, haud minus quam calamum, exerceret *."

An imprudent marriage, at this early period of his life, interrupted his studies; and threw him out of his preferment in Jesus college; of which he had been elected a fellow. He was now reduced to difficult circumstances. The slender income of a lectureship, which he obtained in Magdalen college, seems to have been the whole of what he now enjoyed. But though it produced him little emolument, it tended greatly to increase his reputation. His lectures, which were considered as ingenious and learned compositions, were always attended by a numerous academical audience of every description. They were chiefly directed against the Romish superstitions. "He rubbed the galled backs," says Fuller, "and curried the lazy hides of many an idle and ignorant friar." I know not that these ex-

* Melch. Adam vitæ Theol.

pressions give us a just idea of Mr. Cranmer's talents. They imply a sarcastic manner which was not his. Strong sense, and argument were the only weapons he employed.

He had scarce been married a year, when his wife died: and such was his reputation in the university, and particularly in his own college, that, on this event, he was re-elected into his former station.

He had soon an opportunity of shewing his gratitude. Some agents of Cardinal Wolsey being employed to draw together a body of learned men from both the universities to fill the college of Christchurch in Oxford, which that prelate had just founded; Mr. Cranmer, among others, was applied to; but he did not care to leave his old friends, to whom he had been lately so much obliged; though a better income was offered, and a more promising road to preferment.

In the year 1526* he took the degree of doctor in divinity. The Scripturists, it is evident, had great influence in the university at this time; as we find Dr. Cranmer appointed one of the examiners in theology.

In this situation he did very eminent service to religion by allowing no student to proceed to his degree, who did not appear to be well acquainted with the Scriptures. His strictness however was tempered with so much gentleness, and benignity; that the disappointed candidate, unless a very disingenuous man, plainly saw, that the examiner's conscience drew from him a reluctant severity.

The university however soon felt the good effects of Dr. Cranmer's attention. The young divines caught a new object of pursuit; and entirely changed their mode of study. He would often afterwards say, that in the course of his life, he had met with many eminent scholars, who had told him with great

* Strype is mistaken in fixing it in 1523.

ingenuity, how much they thought themselves obliged to him for the check he had formerly given them at Cambridge, "Had it not been for that, they would add, we might have persisted, all our lives, in our early prejudices."

SECTION II.

While Dr. Cranmer was thus employed, about the year 1529, an epidemical distemper, attended with many symptoms like the plague, broke out at Cambridge. A great alarm was spread: the schools were shut up, and every man endeavoured to provide for his own safety by flight. Dr. Cranmer retired into Essex, to the house of Mr. Cressy, a gentleman of fortune at Waltham; whose sons had been his pupils at Cambridge; and whose education he still continued to superintend. These circumstances were the foundation of all his future fortunes.

That great ecclesiastical cause, king Henry's divorce, was at this time in agitation. The legatine court, which should have decided that business, was just dissolved, and had left the affair in its old uncertainty.

Henry's devotion to the see of Rome had made him thus far submit with patience to its delays.—But his eyes were now in a great measure opened. He began to see that Clement, whose character was a compound of dissimulation and timidity, had been acting a double part; and that while he openly pretended every thing in favour of the divorce, he was in fact no other than the dupe of the emperor. With this clue the English ministry was able to unravel the mazes of the pope's duplicity: and this last affair, the dissolution of the legatine court, and the avocation of the cause to Rome, after so many affected delays, at length convinced even Henry himself, that the pope meant nothing in earnest.

While the monarch, vexed at this new disappointment, was revolving in his mind the indignities he had suffered, he relaxed himself with a short journey, or *progress* (as these journies were then called) through some of the southern counties. On his return, he spent a night at Waltham; where his retinue, as was usual on such occasions, were lodged among the neighbouring gentlemen. Fox, provost of King's college in Oxford, and Gardiner, afterwards the celebrated bishop of Winchester, then attended the king; and were invited, with some others, to the house of Mr. Cressy, where they passed the evening with Dr. Cranmer. The conversation turned on the only topic which was then discussed among courtiers, the unhandsome behaviour of the court of Rome: and on all sides the pope's dissimulation, and the king's forbearance, were spoken of with acrimony and admiration.

Dr. Cranmer, who seemed to have digested the whole business in his mind, said, he thought a method might be pursued, which would tend to bring the matter to a happy issue. When all with great eagerness desired to know what he meant, he told them, his idea was, to collect the opinions of all the universities in Europe on this simple question, Whether it was lawful to marry a brother's wife! Their approbation of the marriage, he said, would satisfy the king's scruples; or their disapprobation of it would bring the pope to a decision.

Dr. Cranmer's opinion seemed very plausible both to Fox, and Gardiner; who failed not, the next morning, to mention it to the king. It struck Henry at once; who, with that indelicacy which was natural to him, cried out with an oath, that "Cranmer had gotten the right sow by the ear."

He was immediately sent for; and had a long conference with the king; which ended in Henry's commands to put his sentiments in writing, both with

regard to the divorce itself; and the manner in which he proposed to conduct it.

The great merit of Dr. Cranmer's proposal, which is not immediately evident, seems to consist, not so much in changing the judges, as in narrowing the question. Instead of inquiring whether the pope's dispensation gave legality to Henry's marriage with his brother's wife? he wished to inquire simply, whether such a marriage was not contradictory to the divine commands? If the universities determined that it was not so, the king must then give up his scruples, and keep his wife. Of this however he was under no apprehension. But if the universities determined that such a marriage was unlawful, the king might then, if the pope were refractory, do without him; saying the marriage was in itself null.

Henry therefore being resolved to adopt this new plan, began next to adjust the proper mode of executing it. He read Dr. Cranmer's papers with great attention; and was persuaded that he, who had shewn himself so much a master of the case, was the only person, in whose management of it, he could thoroughly confide. At the same time he thought an obscure ecclesiastic had not dignity of character enough to represent his person abroad. He joined therefore in commission with him, the earl of Wiltshire and the bishop of London; recommending him, in a particular manner, to the friendship of the former.

The Earl of Wiltshire, with whom Dr. Cranmer ever afterwards maintained a strict friendship, was one of the greatest ornaments of the English court. In a public character he had appeared to advantage, once in Spain, and a second time in Germany. At home he had borne with equal credit, the offices of treasurer of the household, and lord privy seal. In private life, his manners were very amiable. He was one of the most learned men of his age: and one of the best philosophers: and though a courtier, and a statesman, had employed much of his

time in the study of the Scriptures, which he made the rule of his life. To his request it was owing, that Erasmus composed his valuable treatise on a preparation for death. But what still made this excellent man more celebrated than all his virtues, was his being the father of Ann Boleyn; who was at this time well known to be the intended consort of Henry.

In the year 1530, the three commissioners set out on this extraordinary occasion; bending their course first to Italy, where they found success in some of the universities, which were even dependent on the pope. Dr. Cranmer offered to dispute the matter fairly in the Rota.

The pope, at first, was very angry; declaring to those about him, that he would not suffer his power to be discussed by friars; alluding probably to the undignified character of Dr. Cranmer. But finding afterwards of what consequence he was, he became very desirous of attaching him to his interest; and with this view conferred on him the office of penitentiary general of England, with full powers to bind and loose. Dr. Cranmer could not avoid accepting the pope's favour; but as it was a power he never meant to use, he considered it as a very insignificant sinecure.

At the end of the first year, the three delegates having traversed the universities of Italy, the commission was dissolved; and a new one made out, directed solely to Dr. Cranmer, who was stiled *Consiliarius regis, et ad Cæsarem orator*. It bears date, January 24, 1531. No disgust seems to have been taken in the other commissioners; but as Dr. Cranmer was the person, on whom the king chiefly relied, it is probable he had from the first, determined to intrust the matter solely to him, as soon as his character had acquired a little consequence,

Very great success attended his commission. Few scruples were raised; and he had little more to do, than to collect the hands and seals of such universi-

ties as favoured the king's intentions ; which were on the matter, almost all he applied to.

This expedition so readily projected, and so cheerfully undertaken, does not perhaps place Dr. Cranmer in the most advantageous point of light. There were good political reasons, no doubt, to induce the king to wish for a divorce. His marriage with Catharine was by no means generally approved, either at home, or abroad : the legitimacy of Mary, in treaties of marriage with neighbouring princes, had been questioned : and the terrible effects of the late civil wars in England, occasioned by disputed titles, were wounds not yet entirely healed. Male issue to the king, which might prevent such consequences, was therefore very desirable to all men.

But reasons of state, however admissible in a cabinet, should never be supposed to influence a churchman. We allow that Dr. Cranmer might think the marriage wrong : but though it possibly might be a point of conscience with the king, it could however be none with him ; and there was manifestly a difference between advising not to do a thing ; and advising to undo it, when already done ; at least in a matter of so disputable a nature. He knew that, in the Old Testament, the marriage of a sister was allowed, and among the patriarchs often practised : and that the marriage of a brother's wife, was, in some cases enjoined. The New Testament was silent on the subject. There could therefore be no moral turpitude in it : nor any thing but the common law, and usage of nations to restrain it.

On the other hand, the baseness, and ungenerous behaviour, which followed the contrary part, were evident at sight. To repudiate a woman, with whom the king had cohabited near twenty years as his wife ; and to illegitimate a daughter, bred up in the highest expectations, and now marriageable, were acts of such cruelty, that it seems to indicate a want of feeling to be in any degree accessory to them.

To this may be added, that the notoriety of the king's passion for Ann Boleyn, which all men believed to be—if not the first mover, at least the principal spring of his pretended scruples, threw a very indelicate imputation on all who had any concern in the affair. No serious churchman, one would imagine, could be fond of the idea of administering to the king's passions. It is with concern therefore, that we see a man of Dr. Cranmer's integrity and simplicity of manners, acting so much out of character, as to compound an affair of this kind, if not with his conscience, at least with all delicacy of sentiment; and to parade through Europe, in the quality of an ambassador, defending every where the king's *pious intentions*.

But the cause animated him. With the illegality of the king's marriage, he endeavoured virtually to establish the insufficiency of the pope's dispensation; and the latter was an argument so near his heart, that it seems to have added merit to the former. We cannot indeed account for his embarking so zealously in this business, without supposing his principal motive was to free his country from the tyranny of Rome, to which this step very evidently led. So desirable an end would, in some degree, he might imagine, sanctify the means.

This was not the only foreign business in which Dr. Cranmer was employed. He was entrusted with many private dispatches from the king. He had matters of trade also to negotiate for the merchants of England. Once he was obliged to furnish himself with camp equipage, and attend the emperor, who had taken the field against the Turks. In every employment he shewed himself to be a man, whose knowledge was by no means totally confined to his profession; but was of a more general cast, than the simplicity of his character led men to suppose.

If Dr. Cranmer began to think favourably of the

reformation before he left England, he became during his stay abroad, an entire convert. That freedom, with which men discussed religious opinions in Germany, was very agreeable to a man of his liberal turn; and he felt himself every day sitting looser to those prejudices, which had hitherto involved him. Osiander, whom he found at Nuremburgh, contributed, among others, very much to enlighten his mind. The unrestrained conversation of this reformer appeared to him, at first, as a kind of libertinism: it sounded harshly in his ear; and he would ask, if such an opinion were false, how it could possibly possess itself of the minds of the greatest, and most learned men of all ages, through such a tract of time? Osiander carried him boldly still higher into antiquity. Tell me not, said he, what Austin says, and Jerome; but what Peter says, and Paul. Read your bible; and say honestly, whether such and such doctrines are not plainly repugnant to such and such passages of Scripture?

SECTION III.

In the midst of these researches, the attention of Dr. Cranmer was suddenly recalled to other objects. He received a message, informing him, that the king intended to reward his services by bestowing on him the see of Canterbury, then vacant by the death of Dr. Warham.

Whatever exalted ideas Dr. Cranmer might entertain from the king's favour, it is very certain he was both surprised and perplexed at this message. Two things especially occurred to him as matter of great difficulty. The first was the oath he was obliged to take to the pope, which appeared to him as an insuperable obstacle. The other was a more private concern. He had engaged abroad in a second marriage; and however liberal his own sentiments might

be on that subject, he knew the prejudices of the world ran strongly against him. I call them prejudices only, because I think it does not appear, that the *secular* clergy, at that time, were absolutely required to take the vow of celibacy.

Whether he urged his scruples to the king (who in a matrimonial business could not surely be a rigid casuist) does not appear. It is certain, however, that the affair of the marriage was made easy to him; and that the king's message brought him immediately to England. History does not fix the time of his return with any precision. Lord Herbert says, he was present at the king's marriage with Ann Boleyn; which the latest accounts celebrate on the 25th of January, 1533. Archbishop Parker says, he actually performed the ceremony. Fox says, it was impossible, for he was certainly then in Germany. The controversy is scarce worth deciding.

In however contemptible a light the pope's authority was at this time considered, the new archbishop it seems, could not legally be consecrated without bulls from Rome. Henry, it may be imagined, might have dispensed with this form; but to get rid of forms is often the last work of reformation. The price of the commodity however was greatly fallen. The popes formerly exacted more than a thousand pounds of our money, for their bulls of consecration; but the new archbishop, or rather the king, who seems to have managed the matter, contrived to procure them for less than half that sum.

With regard to the oath of fidelity to the pope, which the archbishop was obliged to take at his consecration, he protested, that he took it in no sense, but such as was wholly consistent with the laws of God—the king's prerogative—and the statutes of the realm—that he did not bind himself from speaking his mind freely in matters of religion—the government of the church; and the rights of the crown—and that he meant, on all occasions, to oppose the pope's illegal authority; and condemn his errors.

This oath, taken in a sense so very opposite to its real intention, has often been alleged against the archbishop; and indeed it seems rather to injure the feelings of a delicate mind. His friends however suppose they sufficiently apologize for his behaviour, by observing, that he made his exceptions in an open manner, without any mental reservation; and that he fully satisfied those, who were empowered to administer the oath.

Thus was a private churchman raised, at one step, to the first dignity of his profession; and though the truth of history hath obliged us to confess, that he took some steps not quite so direct as might be wished, in this hasty advancement; yet we cannot by any means consider him as a man who had formed any settled plans of ambition, which he was resolved at all hazards to support; but that in what he did amiss, he was rather violently borne down by the king's authority. His mildness and simplicity were unequally matched with the impetuosity of Henry; who having no scruples of his own, considered little the scruples of others. To this may be added, that the primate thought himself strongly attached by gratitude to his prince. And indeed the errors of this excellent person, as we shall have other occasions to observe, were less owing to the temptations of vice, than to the weakness of some unguarded virtue.—Thus much at least may be said in apology for those parts of his conduct at this time, which seem rather to require one.

As to the king, his placing so good a man at the head of the church, deserves little praise. If we may judge from the general tenor of his character, which was throughout unprincipled, and inconsistent, he meant nothing more than to advance a man, who had shewn himself so ready a casuist; and was able to take so vigorous a part against the church of Rome, which Henry was at this time determined to oppose.

Very soon after his consecration, the primate was called on to finish the great cause of the divorce by passing a final sentence.

The queen had retired to Ampthill, a royal mansion near St. Albans; where she lived with great discretion; and drew the pity and respect of the whole nation by the decency, and dignity of her sufferings. The town of Dunstable, which lay almost in sight of her windows, was appointed by Henry, with his usual indelicacy, as the place where the archbishop, and his associates were to sit in consistory. As Henry well knew the queen would not answer the summons; the vicinity of the place, being of no consequence, had the appearance of an additional affront.

The queen treated the summons she received, with that indignation which was expected; and being pronounced contumacious, a final sentence of divorce was passed.

There was something also very indelicate in placing the primate at the head of this court, as he had already taken so principal a part in the cause. It gave great offence to the queen, and shocked the archbishop himself: but Henry, who had no idea of decency, would hear no reason against it.

Within a few weeks after the divorce, on the 7th of September, 1533, the princess Elizabeth was born; and the king ordered the archbishop to be her godfather.

SECTION IV.

The definitive sentence which had passed in England, it may easily be supposed, occasioned much clamour at Rome, where menaces of excommunication, in a very lofty tone, were thrown out. In return, the king and the primate joined in an appeal to a general council, a theme then very popular;

both among protestants and papists. This appeal they notified to the pope, who was then at Marseilles. It was entrusted to the care of Bonner, afterwards the celebrated bishop of London; who executed his commission with his usual vehemence. The incensed pope, on the other hand, equally impatient, talked of throwing the minister headlong into a cauldron of molten lead: on which Bonner, alarmed at the idea, precipitately retired.

Francis I. was, at this time, joined in bonds of the strictest amity with England. The part which Henry had taken in the affairs of Europe, after the fatal battle of Pavia, had rivetted the generous heart of the French monarch to him with more than political friendship. Francis had seen with real concern, the progress of the breach between Henry and the see of Rome; and had resolved to take this opportunity of an interview with the pope, to endeavour to repay his obligations to the king of England, by bringing his disagreeable difference with the pontiff, if possible, to an accommodation. He made the attempt: but found the pope full of resentment; and it was with the utmost difficulty, that he at length prevailed on him to promise, that Henry might still expect a favourable sentence from the conclave, if he would make his submission before a short day, which was appointed. But this was only half the obstacle. Henry was as lofty as the pope; and could as ill brook submission, as the other could bear controul.

There happened to be in the French king's retinue at Marseilles, a churchman of very eminent abilities, Bellay, bishop of Bayonne. An accidental circumstance had just thrown the eyes of all men upon him. The night before the pope made his public entrance, it was discovered, that the president of the parliament, who had been appointed to receive him with a latin oration, had unluckily chosen a subject which would certainly give the pontiff offence: and yet

there was no time for a new composition. In this article of extremity, when the whole business of the ceremonial was deranged, Bellay offered his service to speak extempore; and did it with such uncommon propriety and elegance, that he was marked from that time, as a man of the first genius in France.

This person the French king made choice of to persuade Henry into the agreement he had just made with the pope. The bishop knew mankind, and could adapt himself to their foibles. Henry was well tinctured with the erudition of those times; and affected greatly the character of being the patron of learning. Bellay knew him thoroughly; and drawing the discourse from business to letters, would often put him in mind of the great reputation he had in Europe for learning, and how much the whole catholic cause was indebted to his pen. By artfully insinuating these topics, he at length engaged Henry to accept the accommodation, which Francis had made for him; and to send a courier with his submission to Rome.

This treaty with the pope was not transacted so secretly, but in part it transpired, and gave the first alarm to the protestant party; whom it entirely convinced of the fickleness of the king's temper, and of the slender grounds they had for the certainty even of a bare toleration. None was more distressed than the archbishop: but with his usual calmness, and caution he held his peace; and trusted for the protection of religion to that Almighty Hand, which had begun the reformation of it.

In this suspense the minds of men remained many weeks; and they whose principles waited on every change, began already to waver; and to talk publicly of the precipitancy of the late innovations, which ran the risk of throwing the kingdom into such a ferment, as could not easily be allayed.

At length the long expected courier arrived from Rome; and produced a new agitation in the minds of men. All was now declared to be over; and such

a breach made with the pope, as could never again be healed.

The account of the matter was this. Contrary winds had detained the courier, it seems, beyond his day. The bishop of Bayonne, (who, after all his services in England, had himself undertaken a voyage to Rome to negotiate with the pope) pressed his holiness to make some allowance for the uncertainty and danger of winds and seas; especially as it was then in the depth of winter: and to suspend a definitive sentence for one week only. But the emperor's influence, and the pope's own irascible temper prevailed for hastier measures. Nay, even the usual forms of business were accelerated; and after a shorter hearing than, in such a case, was commonly allowed, a definitive sentence was passed, confirming the king's marriage with Catharine; and declaring him excommunicated, if he did not put away his present queen.

Two days after the definitive sentence had passed, the king's submission arrived. The pope stood aghast: but it was now too late; the sentence could not be reviewed; the cardinals of the opposition holding firm to the established rules of the conclave. If any event could authorize man to point out the immediate finger of God, this certainly might.

Many historians have entertained doubts of the king's sincerity in this business; and it is certain the parliament, at this time, was beginning to take measures not very agreeable to the popish interest. But however this may be reconciled, it is difficult to say, what Henry's meaning could be, if it was not pure. He had already felt his own strength; and was under no necessity either to amuse or temporize: nor was duplicity among those faults, which are commonly laid to his charge.

While affairs with the court of Rome were thus depending, the emissaries of the popish party allowed themselves unbridled licence in England. We are

amazed that such a prince as Henry could bear to be told in his own chapel, *That unless he restored religion, dogs should lick his blood, as they had licked the blood of Ahab.* But there was a grossness in the manners of those times, which we must carry along with us in all our inquiries into them. The actions of men were perhaps more restrained than they are now; their tongues were certainly more licentious; and Henry, who had no idea of delicacy himself, was less offended, than might be imagined, at the gross indelicacy of others.

But of all the efforts of the popish clergy at this time, the delusions of the maid of Kent were the most extraordinary. This enthusiast, falling into artful hands, was managed in such a way, as to draw the attention of the whole kingdom. Her prophecies were uttered in very free language; and she poured the vengeance of heaven, with a very liberal hand, on the king, and his abettors. Her impostures were at length detected; and she suffered death with her accomplices.

SECTION V.

The parliament, in the mean time, took vigorous measures in support of religious liberty. Such a spirit was raised in the commons, that they debated freely on the great question of the supremacy of the pope—a question which, if ever moved before, had been always treated with the utmost distance and timidity. It was carried however now against the see of Rome, with a very high hand.

In elder times, when parliaments questioned only some exorbitant claim of the pope—his power to raise money in England, or to confer benefices on foreigners; however spirited such inquiries appeared at the time, posterity saw they had been carried on without foresight. A few branches might be lopped

off, but as the trunk itself was left standing, it was able, at the returning season, to shoot as vigorously as before.

One would have imagined, that an act so destructive of popery, as the act of supremacy, would at least have been retarded by some dissentient voices, among so many who were friends to the see of Rome in their hearts. But though it met with opposition, yet it was much less opposed than could have been imagined; and by few persons of consequence. Lee of York, Tunstal of Durham, and Stokesly of London, all papists, and two of them bigoted, acceded to it. Gardiner was even strenuous in its support. "The *realm* and the *church*, (said he, with that subtilty which is characteristic in him) consist of the same people. And as the king is head of the *realm*, he must therefore be head of the *church*."

This act was obtained chiefly by the abilities of the primate, who discovered such a fund of learning, and good sense on the question, and delivered his sentiments in such a flow of natural and easy eloquence, that he silenced opposition, and gave his cause all the lustre, which reason and argument could give.

When the prejudices of men began to cool, and the consequences of this very important act were seriously considered, all sober men of every denomination acknowledged the utility of it. They hoped a more orderly clergy would now succeed; whose manners might be more easily inspected; and whose conduct would be amenable to civil authority. They hoped an end would now be put to those contests between the civil and ecclesiastical powers, which had often cost the nation so dear. They saw a way opened for the redress of many grievances, which could not easily approach the court of Rome at so remote a distance, and so intrenched in forms. In short they saw a variety of advantages from the simplicity of the government, as it was now estab-

lished ; and from the abolition of that gross absurdity in every political system, an *imperium in imperio*.

The protestants had still farther cause for rejoicing. They considered this act as the only thing, which could open a way to reformation. For though in itself it had no immediate connexion either with doctrine or discipline, yet without it no step could be taken towards the reformation of either. Besides, they thought the abrogation of the decretals was a great step towards the introduction of the bible ; and imagined they should be able, through so wide a breach, to push out every error, and every corruption of the church.

When this celebrated act passed, another, as a kind of appendage to it, passed also—the act of succession ; which settled the crown on the children of the present queen ; declaring Mary, the daughter of Catharine, in effect illegitimate.

This act involved in ruin two excellent men. Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More. The parliament had declared the denial of the king's supremacy to be high treason : and imposed a test oath to be taken by all people in office ; and indeed universally, if required. Fisher refused it, and More, when questioned, talked in very ambiguous language. He might as well have spoken plainly. Henry, impatient of controul, considered his ambiguity as guilt. The primate laboured with every application of his interest and talents, to preserve these victims of lawless power. With More he had lived on terms of great familiarity ; and was prompted to employ even casuistry to save him. “ On one hand, said he, you are *doubtful* as to the point in question. On the other, you are *certain*, you ought to obey your prince. Let *doubt* then give way to *certainly*.”—More smiled, and laid his head upon the block.

This was not the only innocent blood, which was shed at this time. That queen, for whose sake

Henry had put away a wife with whom he had lived twenty years, was herself in little more than three, become the object of his aversion; and was condemned to death on the merest surmise. A few unguarded expressions were the utmost, that could be proved against her. She was a lady of a gay and lively temper; and in such dispositions, little verbal levities are not only consistent with the purest manners; but even sometimes perhaps indicative of them. Henry however wished not to find her innocent; and indiscretion had the force of crime.

Among the many suspicious circumstances, which attended this very mysterious affair, it was not one of the least, that during the discussion of it, the archbishop was directed, by an order from the king, to keep his house at Lambeth. The popish party were universally bent against the queen; and it was supposed, were afraid of the primate's interposition and influence.

Henry however, when it served his purpose, introduced him as an actor in the affair. The life of the queen was not all the king aimed at. Her daughter, the lady Elizabeth, must also be declared illegitimate, to make way for the posterity of his future consort. To this end, he resolved, on the strength of some surmise of a precontract, to be divorced from her, before he put her to death. But though the earl of Northumberland, who was supposed to be the other party, made the most solemn allegations, that no such contract had ever existed, yet the king was determined she should be found guilty; and the archbishop was to be his instrument. To him, it is said, the queen made a private confession of her crimes; and the comment of history on her confession is, that having been sentenced to be burnt, or beheaded, as the king pleased, she was terrified into a confession to avoid the more rigorous part of the sentence. On the strength however of

this confession, the archbishop passed a sentence of divorce.

Immediately after this sentence, she was beheaded; and the king, void of every idea, not only of feeling, but of decency, the very next day, married Jane Seymour. By this precipitancy however he made a better apology for the unfortunate Ann Boleyn, than the most zealous of her advocates could have done.

When we consider the whole of this black affair—the want of legal evidence to prove any crime—yet a sentence of death passed in consequence of that insufficient proof—a precontract supposed, which was to void the marriage—and yet the crime of adultery still charged—the terrifying mode of the sentence—and above all, the king's known attachment to another lady—we are surprised to find a man of the archbishop's character, submitting in any shape, to be an actor in so complicated a scene of barbarism, cruelty, absurdity, and injustice. The confession had certainly all the appearance of being extorted—by both parties the contract was denied on oath—and if both parties had even confessed it, it is probable that the archbishop might have found strong arguments to prove, in any other instance, that a consummated marriage was a more inviolable bond than a precontract; and still more so, if the parties first contracting had given up their mutual vows. The whole, in short, has the appearance of a dishonest submission to a tyrant's passions; and we can apologize for it only as we have done for some other of this prelate's compliances, by supposing that his meekness was violently borne down by the king's impetuosity.

Indeed the plenitude of a king's power was never so thoroughly impressed on the minds of men, as in this reign; though it took, in future reigns, as far as such jargon can do, in a more systemized form. The *Vox Dei*, which was afterwards too freely supposed to issue from the people, was however now

supposed to issue solely from the throne. When therefore we find these great condescensions to a prince, in men of eminent characters, we must not measure them by the liberal notions of later times; but must make some allowances for those high ideas of kingly power, which prevailed in those periods, in which they lived.

It is true, we are told, the primate made a spirited application to the king in the queen's favour: but on this apology, it is probable, none of his advocates will be very forward to expatiate. The more innocent he thought her, the more guilty he must think himself.

How far his acting *ex officio* was an apology, let those define, who think themselves obliged to perform the functions of an office, which requires unlawful deeds.

SECTION VI.

Queen Ann's death was considered by the popish party as the signal of victory. They had little conception, that the protestants could unite under any other leader, who could have interest with the king. But they formed a wrong judgment; and had the mortification to see the primate's influence in no degree diminished. All therefore, who wished well to a reformation, looked up to him, as the only person who was capable of conducting it. And indeed he was every way qualified to answer their wishes. By prudent caution, discreet forbearance, and pure simplicity of manners, he was able to oppose and counteract the designs of some of the most artful men of his time. For there are seasons when simplicity will have the advantage of art; and will mislead even the designing man; who judging from his own feelings, considers a plain and open behaviour as a mask.

It was very necessary indeed that the protestant cause should have at least one able leader : for except the archbishop himself, there was not a man who favoured it, and had the power to conduct it. The earl of Essex, it is true, who was then secretary of state, was a man of great ability. No one had taken a juster measure of the times ; or understood with more exactness, that difficult part of the ministerial office, the management of parties. But Essex sat at another helm, which called for all his address ; and he could rarely assist the archbishop, however well inclined, except when the affairs of the church coincided with the business of the state : nor was he enough acquainted with theological matters to give a consequential opinion in any of the intended alterations of religion.

Among the bishops of those times, who favoured the reformation, were Latimer, bishop of Worcester, Shaxton, of Salisbury, and Barlow, of St. David's. These were the primate's natural coadjutors ; but none of them was able to give him any material assistance.

Latimer possessed every virtue that could adorn a Christian prelate. No man opposed vice more successfully ; or kept the clergy of his diocese in better order. But in traversing the arts of party, he had no address. Perfectly sincere himself, he had little comprehension of the duplicity of others ; and seemed to think that nothing was requisite to give either a party, or an individual a proper direction, but a genuine display of truth. He considered only what was right to be done ; not what the times could bear.

Shaxton had lived more in the world than Latimer ; but was still a worse associate to the archbishop. He had an unaccommodating sourness about him ; which was continually taking or giving offence. His moroseness was marked strongly in the lines of his visage ; which almost prejudiced men at sight against

every proposal he could make. Nor was he without a tincture of pride, and self-importance ; which are bad in any man, worse in a churchman, and worst of all in a reformer.

Barlow was as little depended on by the archbishop as either of the other. He was a man of sense and learning ; but was so indiscreet, so totally unguarded, and his conversation so full of levity, that the primate was always afraid of any communication with him on matters of business : and would sometimes say, on coming to the conclusion of a long debate, " This is all very true ; but my brother Barlow, in half an hour, will teach the world to believe it is but a jest."

Perhaps indeed it was not to be regretted, that the primate had no associate. Under the wise counsels of one prudent man, the arduous business of reformation probably prospered better, than it could have done in the hands of many. In the whole system of human affairs, it is certainly the nicest point to conduct the religious opinions of the public. The more quietly and gently every change is introduced, the better. Altercation is fatal to the attempt ; and altercation is generally found in a multiplicity of voices. A multiplicity of opinions succeeds a multiplicity of voices. The passions armed with religious zeal soon enter the lists ; and all is presently confusion.

The wisdom and decisive judgment of a single leader prevented this. By attending carefully to times and seasons, and throwing out only such innovations as he found men were able to bear, the prudent archbishop introduced imperceptibly the most consequential changes.

His difficulties however were very great. To form a religious establishment out of the general confusion, in which all things were now involved, appeared a work of infinite perplexity. That flux of opinions, which the reformation occasioned, was

an endless source of discord: and the more men receded from that central point of authority, which had drawn them together; the wider they spread from each other. Every man had his favourite tenet, in which he thought the sum of Christianity consisted; little sects began to form themselves; and the primate soon found how impossible it was to impress the large idea of religion upon the narrow mind of party.

The same diversity of opinion which distracted the people, was found among the leaders. Every one had his own creed; and the mischief was, that no man thought it a hardship to impose his own creed on others. Some thought the ceremonies only of the Romish church were antichristian; and adhered with firmness to its doctrines. Others rejected the doctrines; but were dazzled with the splendour of its ceremonies. Some again thought it prudent, as a conciliating measure, to retain every thing that could be retained with innocence: while others cried out loudly for utter extirpation; and thought the farther they got from popery, the nearer they advanced to truth.

The difficulties, in the way of reformation, which arose thus from the different opinions of protestants, were still greatly increased by the opposition of papists. This large body of men, it may easily be imagined, were more than ordinarily inflamed by the turn which affairs were likely to take against them. If they were before formidable for their numbers, they now became more so, when embodied in a suffering cause, supporting one common end, and availing themselves of all those arts, which are generally made use of by the instruments of declining party. Among these arts, the most obvious, and the most effectual was, to foment jealousy and discord among the various sectaries of the new religion; to which of themselves they were sufficiently inclined.

But the difficulties, which arose from the popish

party, would have been more easily surmounted, if the king had not been at its head. The fame which Henry had acquired, as *defender of the faith*, had invariably attached his haughty mind to the doctrines of popery. The supremacy indeed flattered his ambition; and he was glad, as far as that was an object, to coincide with the circumstances of the times; but he was careful to have it believed, that he was no convert to the opinions of the new faith; and that his heart had not received the least impression against the religion of his forefathers. Whatever advantage therefore the protestants gained during this reign, they were entirely indebted for it, either to the pride, the caprice, or the interest of the king.

Amidst all these difficulties, the archbishop endeavoured gradually to mature in his own breast every part of the great scheme he had in view, before he ventured to bring it forward.

He began, in the spirit of equity, with redressing the abuses of his own courts; though together with these abuses, he retrenched his own fees; and those of his officers. This gave the public an early and favourable impression of his designs.

The great number of idle holidays, with which the calendar was charged, became the next object of his censure. The archbishop himself, to the astonishment of those around him, sat down to a hot supper on the eve of St. Thomas of Canterbury. As these holidays interfered with seed time and harvest, it was generally not unpopular to abolish them.

It was popular also, as well as highly necessary, to regulate the public discourses of the clergy. The pulpit eloquence indeed of that time, was little more than a gross attempt to exalt the power of the church. The good archbishop saw its abuse; and endeavoured to make it the vehicle of instruction. But the regulations he had yet made were few. With his usual caution he felt his ground as he proceeded; and it was

not till long afterwards, that he completed his intention on this head, by the publication of the homilies.

How exceedingly a reformation in preaching was wanted, we may judge from the following extracts from sermons, which we may suppose were the best the times produced, as they were thought worthy of being made public. In one of these sermons, the priest inveighing against irreverence to the ministers of religion, tells the following story: "St. Austin," says he, "saw two women prating together in the pope's chapel, and the fiend sitting in their necks, writing a long roll of what the women said. Presently letting it fall, St. Austin took it up; and asking the women what they had said, they answered, only a few paternosters. Then St. Austin read the bill, and there was never a good word in it."—In another sermon we are told, "that four men had stolen an abbot's ox. The abbot did a sentence, and cursed them. Three of them were shriven, and asked mercy. The fourth died without being absolved. So when he was dead, his spirit walked by night, and scared all who stirred from their houses after sun set. It happened that once, as a priest went in the night, with God's body, to a sick man, the spirit met him, and told him who he was, and why he walked; and prayed the priest to tell his wife to make amends to the abbot, that he might absolve him; for he could have no rest till then. So this was done, and the poor soul at length went to rest."—In a sermon upon the mass, the people are told, that, among the benefits arising from it, "On the day they hear it, all idle oaths, and forgotten sins shall be forgiven. On that day they shall not lose their sight; nor die a sudden death; nor wax aged: and every step thitherward, and homeward, an angel shall reckon."—The immediate tendency of such discourses was obvious.

SECTION VII.

Thus far the primate, however cautious, ventured with less hesitation. What he had yet done was little more, than fell under his own proper authority. But it required more address to strip the popular opinions of the times of that error, and absurdity, which adhered to them. Some steps however were taken, which at least narrowed a few of the grossest of the popish doctrines.

Tradition was not expressly disavowed; but the bible, and creeds were made the rule of faith.—Images were not forbidden; but the people were instructed to consider them only as incentives of devotion.—Prayers to saints were allowed; but Christ's sole mediation with the Father was insisted on.—Sprinkling holy water, scattering ashes, and creeping to the cross, were tolerated; but the people were assured, they made no atonement for sin.—The existence of purgatory was not disputed; but all indulgences, and mercenary pardons were declared invalid.

How far indeed the archbishop himself was enlightened, cannot easily be known at this day; but it is probable, that whatever had been his own private opinions, he would not have ventured farther in public than he now did.

The doctrine of transubstantiation was left precisely as it stood. Our ecclesiastic writers all agree, that the primate himself held that opinion, till within a few years of his death; which is the more surprising as Wickliff, near two centuries before, had said much to bring it into discredit. How firmly attached the primate was to it, at this time, appeared on the following occasion.

John Lambert, a man of eminent piety, having denied the real presence, was cited before the arch-

bishop ; who with a mixture of mildness and gravity, expostulated with him, on his maintaining so unscriptural an error. Lambert retired modestly ; but it appearing afterwards, that he was not converted, the affair was carried before the king. The king, resolving himself to confute so notorious a heretic, cited him to enter into free debate on the subject. The royal pedant entered the place of combat, surrounded by his bishops, and nobles. The archbishop sat at his right hand, and assisted at this very extraordinary disputation, Lambert being confounded with an assembly so little suited to the freedom of debate, yielded an easy victory to the king ; who triumphing over him in the true spirit of a polemic ; condemned him to the stake. We do not find that the archbishop took any part in his death ; it were to be wished he had rid his hands of the disputation likewise.

The primate shewed the same attachment to the doctrine of transubstantiation on another occasion. Vadian, a learned foreigner, having written a treatise against the corporeal presence, thought it a proper work for the archbishop of Canterbury to patronize, and presented it to him ; concluding that his grace's opinions on that subject, were as liberal as his own. But the archbishop was not a little displeased. He informed Vadian, that his book had not made a convert of him ; and that he was hurt with the idea of being thought the patron of such unscriptural opinions.

In the year 1538, the archbishop finished a great work, which he had long had in hand, the printing of an *English* bible.

Wicliff was the first Englishman who undertook to render the Holy Scriptures into his native tongue. But Wicliff's translation was now obsolete ; and to be found only as a matter of curiosity in a few libraries. In the year 1526 Tindal translated and printed the New Testament in the low countries. But his

translation, which was rather a hasty performance, was very incorrect; and nobody was more sensible of its deficiencies than Tindal himself. He was public spirited enough to have amended the faults of it, by a new edition: but his finances were too scanty for such an undertaking. The zeal of Tunstal bishop of Durham, furnished him the means. Tunstal, though a papist, was the most moderate of men; and being desirous of removing a stumbling block as quietly as possible, he privately bought up the whole impression at his own expence, and burnt it*. This money being returned into Tindal's hands, enabled him to republish his work in a more correct form. By the great industry however of the popish party this edition also was in a good measure suppressed: and indeed it was at best an inaccurate translation; being the performance only of a single man, who laboured also under many disadvantages.

This version however, inaccurate as it was, the archbishop made the basis of the work, he now intended; and the method he took, was to send portions of it to be corrected by the bishops, and other learned divines; reserving to himself the revisal of the whole.

Stokesley, bishop of London, was the only prelate, who refused his contribution. "It is no wonder," said one of the archbishop's chaplains, with more

* A copy of this impression, supposed to be the only copy remaining, was picked up by one of the late lord Oxford's collectors; and was esteemed so valuable a purchase by his lordship, that it is said he settled 20*l.* a year for life on the person who procured it. Lord Oxford's library being afterwards purchased by Osborn, at Grey's Inn gate, this curious book was marked by the undiscerning bookseller at fifteen shillings only; at which price Mr. Ames bought it. When Mr. Ames's books were offered to the public by Mr. Lanford, in May 1760, this book was sold by auction for fourteen guineas and a half. In whose hands it is now, I have not heard.

humour than charity) “ that my lord of London refuses to have any hand in this business : it is a testament, in which he knows well he hath no legacy.” This bible, through the means of the lord Essex, was licensed by the king ; and fixed to a desk in all parochial churches.

The ardour, with which, we are informed, men flocked to read it, is incredible. They, who could, purchased it ; and they who could not, crowded to read it, or to hear it read, in churches ; where it was common to see little assemblies of mechanics meeting together for that purpose after the labour of the day. Many even learned to read in their old age, that they might have the pleasure of instructing themselves from the Scriptures. Mr. Fox mentions two apprentices, who joined, each his little stock, and bought a bible, which at every interval of leisure, they read ; but being afraid of their master, who was a zealous papist, they kept it under the straw of their bed. Such was the extacy of joy, with which this blessing was received at that time—when it was uncommon.

Soon afterwards, under the authority of convocation, the archbishop took a farther step. The creed, the Lord’s prayer, and the ten commandments were allowed to be taught in English. A plain exposition also of the more obvious points of faith, and practice, was published in a treatise, which was generally called the *bishop’s book*, from the hands, through which it went : its real title was, *The Institution of a Christian Man*. It was afterwards enlarged, and published under the royal license ; and then became the *king’s book*.

These were the principal steps, which the archbishop took in the business of reformation—all taken between the years 1533 and 1538. His difficult circumstances allowed no more. It is wonderful indeed he did so much : for except in the matters of supremacy, and transubstantiation, the king and he had

very different sentiments on every topic of religion, and the passions of Henry, those gusts of whirlwind: made it dangerous for any one to oppose him. But the archbishop, though he tried this hardy experiment oftener than once, never lost his favour.—In the business of monasteries he risked it most.

Henry had already laid his rapacious hands on some of the smaller houses; and finding the prey alluring, he determined to make a second, and more daring attempt. The larger houses afforded his avarice a more ample range. The affair was brought into parliament; and men seemed to think, they were at liberty to speak their opinions freely. They agreed, that the wealth of the church was a dead weight on the nation—that it debauched the clergy; and drained the people—and that it was just, and right, to lay public hands on this useless mass of treasure.—At the same time having been shocked at seeing the king appropriate to himself, as he had lately done, the piety of ages; or lavish it in wanton donations on the avarice of his courtiers; they cried, “Let us strip the clergy of their wealth; but let us pass a law, that it may be employed in some national service.”

Of the party which held this language, the archbishop was at the head. With great earnestness he spoke in this cause; and proposed various schemes for throwing this mass of sacred treasure into some useful channel. He mentioned the endowment of schools; the maintenance of scholars at the universities; the foundation of hospitals, and alms-houses: “Nay, rather, said he, than suffer it to be consumed in private channels, let us expend it on high-roads.”

One of his schemes was new; and seems to have been happily conceived. He proposed to institute colleges of priests in every cathedral, composed of students, just removed, and well recommended, from the universities. Here they were to apply themselves to divinity under the eye of the bishops: who

being thus acquainted with their worth and abilities, might collate them from these seminaries to parochial charges.

But this, and all his other beneficial schemes were overruled. The king was determined to apply this wealth to other uses; and hinted his intentions to the house in a very intelligible manner. The royal hint gave a sudden change to the deliberations of parliament. Every man trembled at the idea of opposition. Simple terror effected then, what venality hath since effected. Essex immediately gave way. The boldest speakers were silent. The primate's was the last mouth, which opened in this cause.—His honest zeal shewed the goodness of his heart; and that was the reward of his labour.

SECTION VIII.

The opposition, which the king met with in this business from the protestant party, is thought by many historians to have lessened the archbishop's influence; and to have thrown weight, at this time, into the opposite scale. It is certain, the bishop of Winchester, and other leaders of the popish party, began now to assume unusual spirits, and to appear with more importance at court.

The bishop of Winchester was one of those motley ministers, half statesman, and half ecclesiastic, which were common in those needy times, when the revenues of the church were necessary to support the servants of the crown. It was an invidious support; and often fastened the odium of an indecorum on the king's ministers; who had, as ministers always have, opposition enough to parry in the common course of business; and it is very probable, that Gardiner, on this very ground, hath met with harder measure in history, than he might otherwise have done.

He is represented as having nothing of a churchman about him, but the name of a bishop. He had been bred to business from his earliest youth; and was thoroughly versed in all the wiles of men, considered either as individuals, or embodied in parties. He knew all the modes of access to every foible of the human heart; his own in the mean time, dark, and impenetrable. "He was a man, who," as Lloyd quaintly says, "was to be traced like the fox; and like the Hebrew, to be read backwards:" and though the insidious cast of his eye indicated, that he was always lying in wait: yet his strong sense, and persuasive manner, inclined men to believe he was always sincere; as better reasons could hardly be given, than he had ready on every occasion. He was as little troubled with scruples, as any man, who thought it not proper entirely to throw off decency. What moral virtues, and what natural feelings he had, were all under the influence of ambition; and were accompanied by a happy lubricity of conscience, which ran glibly over every obstacle.—Such is the portrait, which historians have given us of this man; and though the colouring may be more heightened in some than in others; yet the same turn of feature is found in all.

This prelate being at the head of the popish party, and aided by the duke of Norfolk's influence, thought he had now an opportunity to strike a blow, which might be fatal to the protestant cause. The times favouring him, he insinuated to the king, that the measures he was now pursuing had placed him in a very precarious situation with regard to foreign powers—that the German protestants would in all probability be crushed—and that if this should be the case, it was very likely from the temper and situation of men and things, that his majesty would see a very formidable league excited against him by the popish princes—that it was prudent at least to guard against such an event—and that it might easily be

done by enacting some laws in favour of the old religion, which might shew Christendom, that he had not set his face against the church; but only against the supremacy of the pope.

This language in a prudential light, was more than plausible; and it had its full effect on Henry; especially as it coincided with his own apprehensions. For the enterprizing spirit of Charles V. then in league with the pope, seemed to be carrying every thing with a full tide of success in Germany; and to have nothing so much in contemplation as to re-establish, through Europe, the spiritual dominion of the pope.

An alteration in the public faith was then a matter of easy decision. The king's inclination alone was sufficient to enforce it. The duke of Norfolk therefore, as had been agreed, informed the house of the king's wish to shew his regard to the old religion; and as it would be agreeable to his majesty to have every body think as he did, the duke presumed, that nobody wished to think otherwise.

The king's ideas were received with reverence, and the whole house became immediately zealous papists; and passed an act, which had been framed by Gardiner, in favour of some of the more peculiar doctrines of the Roman church—transubstantiation—communion in one kind—vows of chastity,—the celibacy of the clergy—private masses—and auricular confession. This act, which passed in the year 1539, is known by the name of the act of the *six articles*; and was guarded according to the supposed degrees of guilt, by fines, forfeitures, imprisonment, and death.

The good archbishop never appeared in a more truly Christian light, than on this occasion. In the midst of so general a defection, (for there were numbers in the house, who had hitherto shewn great forwardness in reformation), he alone made a stand. Three days he maintained his ground; and baffled

the arguments of all opposers. But argument was not their weapon ; and the archbishop saw himself obliged to sink under superior power. Henry ordered him to leave the house. The primate refused : “ It was God’s cause, he said, and not man’s.” And when he could do no more, he boldly entered his protest.—Such an instance of fortitude is sufficient to wipe off many of those courtly stains, which have fastened on his memory.

As the primate himself was a married man, it hath been said, he was particularly interested in this opposition : and it is certain, that as soon as the act passed, he sent his wife, who was a niece of Oslander’s, into Germany. But Mr. Strype gives us good reason to believe that his chief objection to any of these articles, was the cruelty of the penalties, with which they were guarded ; so alien, he thought, to the spirit of Christianity.

It is amazing that the very extraordinary freedom, which the archbishop took on this occasion, did not entirely ruin him in the king’s favour. Indeed all men expected to have seen him sent immediately to the tower. But Henry’s regard for him was so far from being lessened, that he ordered the duke of Norfolk, with the earl of Essex, and others, to dine with him the next day at Lambeth ; and comfort him, as the king phrased it, under his disappointment.—“ My lord archbishop,” said Essex, “ you were born in a happy hour. You can do nothing amiss. Were I to do half of what you have done, my head must answer it :”—A prophetic speech, as it afterwards appeared !

This singular visit, at Lambeth, though so well intended by the king, was the source of great mortification to all. The conversation, after dinner, falling on the late ministry, and Wolsey’s name being mentioned, Essex could not forbear drawing a parallel between the archbishop and the cardinal. The cardinal, said he, through the violence of his temper

in managing a debate, would often change his friends into enemies: whereas the mildness of the archbishop often makes his enemies his friends. The duke of Norfolk adopted the remark; and surely, (said he with a sarcastic sneer,) nobody knew the cardinal better than my lord Essex, who was once his menial. Essex answered with some wrath, that he was not the only person in company, who had served the cardinal; at least, who had shewn an inclination to serve him: for if fame spoke truth, the great duke of Norfolk himself had offered to be the cardinal's admiral, if ever he should attain the papacy. The duke of Norfolk firing at this, started up, and with a vehement oath, cried out, he lyed. Essex preparing to resent the affront, the archbishop got up, and with the rest of the company interfering, composed the quarrel at that time: but the duke laid it up in one of those secret chambers of his memory, where those affronts are registered, which nothing but blood can expiate.

The arguments, which the archbishop had used in parliament against the act of the six articles, had been represented to the king in so strong a light, that he expressed a great desire to see them; and the archbishop accordingly had them fairly copied out for his inspection. The fate of the volume, in which they were contained, occasioned some perplexity.

Among the amusements of the English monarchs of those times, that of bear-baiting on the river Thames was in high esteem. In this diversion Henry happened to be engaged, when the archbishop's secretary took boat at Lambeth, charged with his master's book to Westminster. The waterman had orders to keep as far as possible from the tumult; but whether led by curiosity to see the pastime, or through some unavoidable accident, he found himself presently in the midst of the crowd; and by a mischance still greater, the bear making directly to

his boat; climbed up the side, and overset it. The secretary was soon taken up; but recovering from his surprize, he found he had lost his book. He hoped it might have sunk to the bottom; but he discovered afterwards, that it had fallen into the hands of some ignorant persons, who had conveyed it to a popish priest. The priest conceiving it to be a satire on the six articles, determined to carry it to the council. The secretary, in the mean time, suspecting what might happen, applied to lord Essex, as his master's friend. He had scarce told his story, when the priest appeared, at the door of the council-chamber, with the book under his arm. Lord Essex addressing him in an angry tone, and telling him that the book belonged to a privy-counsellor; the priest delivered it up, with many humble gesticulations; and was glad to get off without farther question.

SECTION IX.

The act of the six articles, was a signal to the whole popish party. They now plainly saw their power; and had only to exert it properly. The parliament and convocation were the scenes of action. Here the primate almost singly opposed them. A few of the bishops lent him aid; but it was feeble. They were either uninterested in the cause; or men of no abilities in business. One or two of them, from whom he expected assistance, deserted him. But the severest loss he felt, at this time, was that of his great friend, the earl of Essex.

The interest of that eminent statesman declined with that of the protestants; and he paid at the block, the penalty of his master's offences. The dissolution of monasteries had given general disgust. The alms, and hospitality of the monks, indiscriminately administered, had through a course of ages invited sloth; and these channels of ready supply being now

stopped, the necessitous found it irksome to exchange a life of idleness for a life of industry. A general discontent soon finds a mouth to express it. Clamour grew loud; and the king's government uneasy. Something must necessarily be done.

Among all the arts of expediency laid up in the cabinets of princes, the readiest is to sacrifice a minister. The death of Cromwell was represented to the king as the best mean of composing the people. But though prudential reasons may necessitate a prince to discard a minister, yet guilt only, and that nicely examined, can authorize an act of blood. The hand of a tyrant however generally throws aside the balance. It is a nice machine; and requires pains, and temper to adjust it. The sword is an instrument more decisive; and of easier dispatch. Henry's was always stained with blood—often with innocent blood—but never with blood more innocent than that of Essex.

Among the many friends of this great man, several of whom had tasted largely of his bounty, not a single person endeavoured to avert his ruin, but the primate. He with generous friendship wrote to the king; united himself to the falling minister; and endeavoured, at the hazard of his own safety, to inspire his royal master with ideas of justice. But the fate of Essex was decreed; and so light a thing, as a whisper from the still voice of justice, could not avert it.—History unites in marking the duke of Norfolk, and the bishop of Winchester, as the secret contrivers of this base affair.

The primate and Essex had ever maintained a uniform friendship for each other, through every period of their power. It was a friendship pure from jealousy on both sides. Amidst all the jarrings of court faction, nothing ever disturbed it. Each knew the integrity of the other's intentions; and each supported the other's schemes with an exertion of all his interest. In some things perhaps the zeal of Essex

for his friend was apt to carry him too far; and the primate had oftener than once occasion to repress it.

A priest near Scarborough, sitting among his companions, over his beer, at the door of a country ale-house; and somebody happening to mention the archbishop; "That man," said the priest, "as great as he is now, was once but an ostler; and has no more learning, than the goslings yonder on the green." Essex, who had his spies in every quarter, was informed of what the priest had said. A messenger was immediately dispatched for him; and he was lodged in the Fleet.

Some months elapsed, when the archbishop, who was entirely ignorant of the affair, received a petition from the poor priest, full of penitence for his imprudence, and of supplication for mercy.

The primate having inquired into the business sent for him. "I hear," said he, "you have accused me of many things; and among others, of my being a very ignorant man. You have now an opportunity of setting your neighbours right in this matter; and may examine me, if you please."

The priest, in great confusion, besought his grace to pardon him: he never would offend in the same way again.

"Well then," says the archbishop, "since you will not examine me, let me examine you."

The priest was thunder-struck; making many excuses; and owning he was not much learned in book-matters.

The archbishop told him, he should not then go very deep; and asked him two or three of the plainest questions in the bible; Who was David's father? and who was Solomon's?

The priest confused at his own ignorance, stood speechless.

"You see," said the archbishop, "how your accusation of me, rises against yourself. You are an admirable judge of learning and learned men.—Well,

my friend I had no hand in bringing you here, and have no desire to keep you. Get home; and if you are an ignorant man, learn at least to be an honest one."

Soon after, the earl of Essex came to the primate; and with some warmth told him, he might for the future fight his own battles—that he had intended to have made the priest do penance at Paul's cross; but his grace's misjudged lenity had prevented him.

"My good lord," said the primate, taking him by the hand, "be not offended. I have examined the man myself; and be assured from me he is neither worth your notice, nor mine."

Notwithstanding however the loss of his great associate, the archbishop did not despair. An attempt was made in convocation to revive some popish ceremonies. A sort of ritual was produced, which consisted of ninety articles. The archbishop unaided went through the whole; and reasoned with such strength of argument as brought over many to his opinion. Whom he could not convince, he silenced.

The next field in which he appeared was the house of lords; where he himself made the attack, by bringing in a bill to mitigate the penalties of the six articles. This was a bold attempt, and drew on him the whole force of opposition. The bishops of Rochester and Hereford, who had promised to assist him, gave way as the debate grew warm; and begged the archbishop to follow their example. It was in vain, they told him, to persist: he could not benefit his cause; but he might ruin himself. The archbishop, with that spirit which he always exerted, where religion was concerned, declared himself careless of any consequence.

His perseverance had an effect, which he durst not have hoped for. The laity were entirely exempted from the penalties of the act; and the clergy were in no danger, till after the third conviction. The primate obtained also, that no offences should

be cognizable, after they had lain dormant a year. It is not improbable that he was indebted for this victory to the book, which he had sent to the king; the rigour of whose opinions it might, in some degree, have qualified.

In another effort also the primate obtained an advantage. He prevailed with the king to allow the use of a few prayers in the English tongue: which was the first attempt of the kind, that had been made.

On the other hand, he had the mortification to see the use of the bible taken away. Winchester brought the affair into convocation. In the debate which ensued, the translation was chiefly objected to, "Let the people have their bible," said Winchester, "but let it be a correct one; and let not error and heresy be spread by authority." He proposed therefore to have the bible carefully examined; and with this view to have it put into the hands of the bishops; where he doubted not he had influence to suspend it, as long as he pleased. The primate saw his policy, and with all his weight opposed him. He wished to preserve the present translation even with all its inaccuracies; which he thought better than to run the risk of a new one. But he could not prevail. One point however he gained. Instead of putting the Bible into the hands of the bishops; he got it put into the hands of the two universities, which he supposed would be less subject to popish influence.

He was right in his conjecture; for the universities were very speedy in their revision. But the primate had the old battle to fight again. Though a more correct bible was produced, yet the same opposition was still made to its publication; and new topics of argument were introduced. The archbishop however, had now encouraged a considerable party to second him; and the affair was combated with great vigour. But the opposition of the popish party became so formidable, that the archbishop was again entirely deserted. Single however, as he had

done before, he still bore up against his adversaries ; and persevered, till by dint of perseverance he obtained a limited use of the Bible, though it was never publicly allowed during the remainder of Henry's reign.

SECTION X.

While the primate was acting this great and noble part in parliament, an unexpected event placed him in a very delicate and dangerous situation.

At an early hour, in the morning, an unknown person of the name of Lascelles, desired a secret admittance to him ; and with much hesitation opened an affair, which the archbishop would often say, gave his spirits a greater agitation than he ever felt before, or after.—The affair was no less than the discovery of the queen's incontinence.

The primate, with his usual caution, weighed the information ; and the proof on which it rested ; and he had the more time for deliberation, as the king was then on a progress. If the information were justly founded, it was both wrong, and dangerous, to conceal it—if unjustly, it was equally so to divulge it. The dilemma was difficult.

The business was perplexed also by a circumstance of peculiar delicacy. The queen was niece to the duke of Norfolk, who was at the head of the popish party ; and the good primate, who had seen with what sinister arts that class of men had carried on their schemes, was apprehensive, that such a story as this might have too much the air of retaliation, and the malignity of party ; and if it should prove false, would fix an imputation on his character, which he had ever been careful to avoid. His enemies, he knew, were always on the watch against him ; and might, for ought he knew, have taken this very method of doing him an injury.

Thus distracted by a view of the affair in every light, he went at last to the lord chancellor, and the earl of Hertford, whom the king had left with a commission of regency, during his absence; and to them he unbosomed his distress.

After the first impression of terror was over, with which the privacy of such an affair naturally struck every one, who was connected with the tyrant, the chancellor, and lord Hertford were both of an opinion, that as the affair rested on such undoubted evidence, it was less hazardous to divulge, than to conceal it. This point being settled, the more arduous one still remained, of informing the king. The primate thought it best, that all three should join in the information; and give it that weight, which no single person could give. The two lords, on the other hand, were of a different opinion. As the intelligence, they said, had been given to the primate, and they had only been consulted, the information would come most naturally from him. Besides, they remarked, it was more respectful to keep a matter of so delicate a nature in a single hand; and if so, the primate's ecclesiastical character, and well known judgment made him the properest messenger of bad news; as when he had given the wound, he could pour in balm to heal it.—In conclusion, the meekness of the archbishop gave way; and he took upon himself alone, the task of carrying the unwelcome truth to the king.

It was indeed an unwelcome truth. The king at this time, had so little conception of the queen's dishonesty, and loved her with such entire affection, that he had lately given public thanks for the happiness he enjoyed with her.

The method which the primate took, was to draw up the whole affair on paper, with all the evidence, on which it rested, and present it to the king in private.

Henry took the information as we may suppose

he would. His fury broke out in vehement execrations and threats against those who had been the contrivers of such villany. And yet even in his rage he seems to have spared the archbishop, as a man who might be imposed on; but could not intend deceit. By degrees however, as his royal fury subsided, and he examined the evidence coolly, it made a deep impression on him; and passions of another kind began to rise. In short, the queen and her accomplices were tried, condemned, and executed. A little before her death, she confessed her guilt to the archbishop; and the full voice of history bears testimony to the justice of her sentence.

About the time in which the archbishop was concerned in this affair, he was engaged in another, almost equally invidious; the visitation of All-souls-college in Oxford. That society was in much disorder. Their dissensions gave great offence; and the irregularity of their manners still greater. They are taxed, in the language of those times, with their *scandalous computations, commessations, and ingurgitations*. The archbishop, as visitor, was called in by one of the contending parties; and he found it no easy matter to compose their heats and restore good manners. With his usual vigour he went through the disagreeable task; and having mixed as much lenity as possible, with his censures, he reviewed their statutes; and made such additions as he hoped would prevent any misbehaviour for the future.

In the year 1542, which was the year after these troublesome affairs, happened the battle of Solway-moss; where the Scottish army received a total defeat. Many of their nobility being taken prisoners, were sent to London, and committed to the care of the most considerable persons about the court. The earl of Cassilis was sent to Lambeth, Here he found himself in a school of philosophy and religion; where every thing great and noble, and liberal, abounded. Cassilis himself had a turn for litera-

ture ; and soon became enamoured with this amiable society. The gentleness, and benevolence of the archbishop, in particular attracted his esteem ; and brought him to think more favourably of the reformers ; to whose opinions he soon became a thorough convert. Scotland had not yet received the tenets of the reformation : and the archbishop would often say, " That when it should please God to enlighten that country, he hoped the intimacy which had subsisted between him and the earl of Cassilis, might not wholly be without effect." And in fact it proved so : for some years afterwards, when the reformed opinions got footing in Scotland, nobody contributed so much to establish them, as that nobleman.

SECTION XI.

Thought it might be supposed that the queen's death would have weakened the popish cause, yet we do not find that it produced any such effect. Many remarked, that after the first heat of the rupture with Rome, the king had been gradually returning towards it ; and that, with regard to all the doctrines of popery, he was at this time more zealous than he had ever been : and they accounted for it very plausibly, by observing, that as his passions began to cool, the religious fear took more possession of him.

The popish party, it is certain, at this period, assumed unusual spirits ; and thought they had influence enough to obtain any point.

One morning the primate was surprised with a message from the king, who lay off Lambeth in his barge, and wished immediately to speak with him. As he came on board, the king called out, " I can now inform you who is the greatest heretic in Kent : " and ordering the barge to row gently up the river, he seated the archbishop by him, and produced a large book, which he said contained an accusation

of several of the Kentish ministers against their diocesan.

The archbishop, who was not very present in the article of surprize, gazed first at the king, and then at the book, and could not, in some minutes, collect an answer. The king bad him not be distressed : " I consider the affair, said he, merely as a combination of your enemies ; and as such I shall treat it."

Commissioners were soon after appointed to examine the evidence against the primate ; and at the head of the board, the king, with his usual indelicacy, placed the primate himself. The archbishop was shocked at this designation ; and could barely be prevailed on to appear once at the opening of the commission. It sufficiently shewed however, how the king stood affected ; and saved the Archbishop's advocates the trouble of any laboured defence. Each of the accusers endeavoured, with what art he was able, to withdraw himself from a business. which was likely to bring him so ungrateful a return.

The chief contriver of this whole affair was the bishop of Winchester, who with great assiduity, had collected a variety of passages from sermons, and other discourses in which it was supposed, the archbishop had shewn more regard to the *new learning*, (as protestantism was called) and the professors of it, than the laws then in force allowed.

Among other agents whom Winchester employed, he drew over by his insinuating arts two persons, who were very nearly connected with the archbishop himself ; Dr. Thonndon, suffragan of Dover, and Dr. Barber, a civilian. Each of them had been promoted by the archbishop, and held an office under him ; and both had been always treated by him on the footing of intimate friends. Barber even lived in his house ; and had a pension settled on him, that he might be ready with his advice on every occasion. When the proofs therefore, of this confederacy were put into the primate's hands, we may suppose his

astonishment on finding a letter from each of these persons, containing a variety of matter against him, which his familiarity, and unreserved freedom with them had easily furnished.

Soon afterwards, when these two persons happened both to be with the archbishop, at his house at Beckesburne; "Come your ways with me, said he, leading them into his study; I must have your advice in a certain matter." When he had carried them to a retired window in the room, "You twain, he resumed, be men in whom I have had much trust; and you must now give me some council. I have been shamefully abused by one or twain, to whom I have shewed all my secrets. And the matter is so fallen out, that they have not only disclosed my secrets, but also have taken upon them to accuse me of heresy; and are become witnesses against me. I require you therefore to advise me, how I shall behave myself to them. You are both my friends; what say you to the matter?"

Whether they had any suspicion of the archbishop's meaning, does not appear: As the question however was put, they could not avoid pronouncing with great severity against such villainy. The primate then drawing the letters from his bosom, "Know you, said he, these papers, my masters?—You have condemned yourselves. God make you both good men. I never deserved this at your hands. If such men as you are not to be trusted, there is no fidelity to be found. I fear my left hand will accuse my right." Having said this, he added after a pause, that they might rest assured, he would take no steps to punish their baseness: but he thought it fit to discharge them from his service.

The king however treated the archbishop's accusers with more severity; and threw many of them into prison. This alarming Gardiner, he wrote a letter to the primate in the following abject style.

"Gentle father, I have not borne so tender a

heart towards you, as a true child ought to bear ; though you never gave me occasion otherwise ; but rather by benefits provoked me to the contrary. I ask mercy of you with as contrite a heart, as ever David asked of God.—I desire you to remember the prodigal child. I am full sorry for my fault ; heartily confessing my rashness, and indeliberate doings. Forgive me this fault ; and you shall never hereafter perceive, but that at all times I shall be as obedient, as ever was child to his natural father. I am yours, and shall be yours ; and that truly while I live. Good father, I have given myself unto you, heart, body, and service. And now remember that I am your true servant.”

This letter, though it appears from Winchester’s future life, to have been a mere artifice, so wrought on the gentle nature of the primate, that hearing the king was resolved to lay Winchester’s letters before the house of lords, he went to him, and at length prevailed on him, not to give the bishop any further trouble ; but to let the matter drop.

The event of this accusation checked the ardour of the archbishop’s enemies for some time ; but it revived again in about two years, on the death of Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk.

With this nobleman the king had preserved, through life, a friendship, of which it was not thought his heart was susceptible ; and on hearing of his death, he pronounced a short eulogy on his memory, which was beyond the most laboured panygeric. The news was brought him in council : “ God rest his soul ! (said the king, with much emotion :) he was an honest man. I have known him long ; and never knew him speak a bad word behind the back of any man.” Then turning round the board with a sarcastic air, “ Of which of you my lords, added he, can I say as much ? ”

The duke’s amiable manners had long engaged the esteem of the archbishop ; whose virtues, in return,

were equally admired by the duke. A very sincere friendship subsisted between them; and it was thought the persuasive arguments of the primate had drawn the duke to think favourably of the reformers, whose friend and patron he was generally esteemed.

Though the duke had ever been a cautious man, and interfered little in public affairs, yet considering his favour with the king, the popish party thought his death of great advantage to their cause. They conceived, that it might both weaken the protestant interest; and tend also to lessen the king's regard for the primate.

Elated with these hopes, the bishop of Winchester and his emissaries, beset the king, now yielding to age and infirmity; and endeavoured to awaken his religious fears. "In vain might wise laws struggle with heresies, if the patrons of those heresies were above law. Of his majesty alone redress could be had. He was God's vicegerent, to rectify the abuses of the times; and might be assured, the sword was not put into his hands in vain: he was accountable for the trust."

From hints they proceeded to plainer language; and at length, in direct words, informed the king, that while the archbishop sat in council, nothing effectual could be consulted about religion. They prayed his majesty therefore to give leave for the primate to be sent to the Tower; and it would then be seen how ample a charge against him would appear. The king pondered, and consented.

That very evening, as it grew dark, Henry sent for the archbishop to Whitehall. He was walking pensively in a long gallery, when the archbishop entered, "My lord of Canterbury," said the king, "I have given permission to have you sent to the tower. Some lords of council have dealt with me to that purpose. They have grievous things to lay to your charge, which they dare not utter, while you have free admission to the board."

The archbishop expressed his readiness to have his conduct inquired into, in whatever manner the king thought fit: and offered to go, with great alacrity, to the Tower, till he had fully answered the accusations of his adversaries.

The king interrupting him, as his manner was, with a burst of vociferation, expressed his surprize at the primate's simplicity: but immediately softening his voice told him, that it was much easier to keep him from the Tower, than to deliver him out of it. "You will be sent for, said he, in the morning, by the council; and dealt with haughtily. If the lords talk of committing you, desire you may first hear your accusers. If they deny this, appeal to me; and take this ring, which you may shew them as a token."

At eight the next morning, the archbishop was accordingly called before the council; and was kept some time standing at the door. Being admitted, he punctually followed the king's directions; and when the lords insisted on sending him to the Tower, he appealed to the king, who had taken the affair, he told them, into his own hands. As he said this, he produced the ring, which was a token very well known.

Every one present was confounded; and the lord Russel starting up, cried out with an oath, "I told you my lords, how it would be; and that the king would never suffer him to be committed."

When the affair was brought before the king, he made a short business of it. Striding haughtily round the room, and throwing an eye of indignation, first on one, and then on another: "I thought, said he, I had a discreet council; but I see I am deceived. How have ye handled here my lord of Canterbury? What made ye of him? a slave; shutting him out of the council chamber among serving men.—I would have you to understand, by the faith I owe to God, (laying his hand solemnly on his breast)

that if a prince can be beholden to a subject, I am to my lord of Canterbury; whom I account as faithful a man towards his prince, as ever was prelate in this realm: and one to whom I am sundry ways beholden: and therefore he that loveth me, will regard him."

Having said this he strode out; and left the lords endeavouring which should apologize to the primate in the highest strain of compliment. Next day the king sent several of them, as was customary with him, after such dissensions, to dine with the archbishop at Lambeth.

There is something singular in this whole affair. It is difficult to say, whether Henry was at first in earnest, and afterwards changed his resolution; or whether he took this method to check the forwardness of the archbishop's enemies.

While this scene was acting in the council, a part of the same plan was preparing in parliament. There sir John Goswick, in a studied harangue, accused the archbishop of being an upholder of heretical opinions; with which he had greatly infected the county of Kent. Henry being informed of this motion, called a gentleman in waiting, and sent sir John this message: "Tell that varlet Goswick, that if he do not presently reconcile himself to my lord of Canterbury, I will punish him for the example of others. What knows he of my lord's preaching in Kent? was not he, at that time, in Bedfordshire?"—The message was very intelligible; and had its full effect.

SECTION XII.

But it was not only in matters of religion that every advantage was taken against the archbishop; the most trivial cavils were often made. He had enemies ready for any species of calumny; and Sir

Thomas Seymour, who had abilities to object to nothing else, was able to object to the meanness of his house-keeping. On this head, he threw out insinuations to the king. Henry heard him with apparent indifference; and carelessly answered, "Ay! Seymour? and does my lord of Canterbury keep as little hospitality, as you say? In good faith, I thought the contrary."

The king said no more, but took an early opportunity to send Sir Thomas, on some frivolous message, to Lambeth, about dinner-time. When he came there, he was carried through the great hall, where a bountiful table was spread, though only in its ordinary manner. From thence he was conducted up stairs to the archbishop, where he found a large company just sitting down to dinner; among whom the archbishop, in his usual hearty manner, insisted that Sir Thomas should take a place.

The next time the king saw him, "Well, said he, Seymour, what cheer had you at Lambeth! for I suppose my Lord would keep you to dine."

The poor man, confounded at the question, and seeing plainly the king's meaning, threw himself at his feet, and begged his majesty to pardon the foul slander, with which he had aspersed the archbishop. He then frankly mentioned all he had seen; and concluded with saying, he believed nobody in the realm, except his highness himself, kept such a table.

"Ah! good man! said the king; all he hath, he spendeth in house-keeping: and if he now keep such a table, as you say, it being neither term, nor parliament, he is meetly visited, at those times, I warrant you.—But," added the king, assuming a severer tone, "I know the bottom of all these falsities. You want to have a finger in church matters, do you? But you may set your heart at rest: while I am king, there shall be no such doings."

These insinuations with regard to the archbishop's great economy, seem, in some degree, to have been

credited by Sir William Cecil; who, in a letter, told the primate freely, what was current at court—that he, and all the bishops were immensely rich—and that they had nothing in view, but raising princely fortunes for their families.—The archbishop's answer to Cecil is so ingenuous, and bears so strong a stamp of honesty, that it is well worth transcribing.

“After my hearty commendations and thanks, as well for your gentle letter, as for the copy of the pacification; and for your good remembrance of the two matters, which I desired you not to forget; the one concerning the bishop of Cologn's letters; and the other concerning Mr. Mowse; for whom I give you my most hearty thanks.

“As for your admonition, I take it most thankfully; as I have ever been most glad to be admonished by all my friends; accounting no man so foolish, as he that will not bear friendly admonition. For myself, I fear not that saying of St. Paul, which you quote against me, half so much as I do stark beggary. I took not so much care about my living, when I was a scholar at Cambridge, as at this present: and if a good auditor had my accounts, he would find no great surplusage to grow rich on.

“As to the rest of the bishops, they are all beggars, except one man; and I dare well say, he is not very rich. If I knew any bishop that were covetous, I would surely admonish him.

“To be short, I am not so doted as to set my mind upon things here; which I can neither tarry long with, nor carry away with me. If time would have served, I would have written longer; but your servant making haste, compelleth me to leave off; beseeching almighty God to preserve the king, and all his council; and send him well from his progress.

Your own ever,

T. Cantuar.”

These invidious reports, with regard to the avarice of the bishops, are commonly ascribed to the avarice of the courtiers; who were desirous of adding the revenues of the bishopricks to the spoils of the monasteries. The wealth of the bishops therefore, was the fashionable court-topic of that day: and every patriot declaimed on the expediency of stripping them of their temporalities, and settling pensions on them; that they might not be encumbered with secular affairs.

Henry knew well the meaning of this language; and alluded to it, when he told Sir Thomas Seymour *he wanted to have a finger in church matters.*

But though Henry would not allow his courtiers to strip the clergy of their possessions, he was very well inclined to do it himself. His method was, to oblige the bishops to make disadvantageous exchanges with crown lands. In this way he stripped the see of Canterbury, during archbishop Cranmer's time, of 150*l.* of annual rent; and the archbishop would often hint, that if he were less hospitable than his predecessors, a reason might be given.

During the short remainder of Henry's reign, the archbishop met with no farther disturbance of any kind; his enemies being now convinced of the king's resolution to skreen him from all attacks. Indeed the protection which Henry at all times afforded him, in opposition to his own irritable and implacable temper, the genius of his religion, and the bias of bigotry, makes one of those strange contradictions, which we sometimes meet with, but cannot account for, in the characters of men.

It is somewhat singular that Henry, on one of these late attacks, observing the mildness of the primate's temper, the acrimony of his adversaries, and the danger he must necessarily run, when deprived of the protection of his prince, gave him for his arms, as if in the spirit of foresight, three pelicans feeding their young with their own blood: and

added, in an odd jumble of coarse metaphor, "That he was likely to be tasted, if he stood to his tackling."

The last act of this reign was an act of blood; and gave the archbishop a noble opportunity of shewing how well he had learned that great Christian lesson of forgiving an enemy.

Almost without the shadow of justice, Henry had given directions to have the duke of Norfolk attainted by an act of parliament. The king's mandate stood in lieu of guilt; and the bill passed the house with great ease.

No man, except the bishop of Winchester, had been so great an enemy to the archbishop, as the duke of Norfolk. He had always thwarted the primate's measures; and oftener than once had practised against his life. How many would have seen with secret pleasure the workings of Providence against so rancorous an enemy; satisfied in having themselves no hand in his unjust fate! But the archbishop saw the affair in another light: he saw it with horror; and although the king had in a particular manner interested himself in this business, the primate opposed the bill with all his might; and when his opposition was vain, he left the house with indignation; and retired to Croydon.

While the king was pushing on the attainder of the duke of Norfolk, with such unjust and cruel precipitancy, he was himself hastening apace to the grave. He had long been an object of disgust and terror. His body was become a mass of foetid humours; and his temper was so brutal, that if he had not been diverted by a stratagem, he would have put his queen to death, only for differing from him on a point of theology—a queen too, whose daily employment it was, to sit for hours on her knees before him, dressing the offensive ulcers of his legs. His attendants approached him with trembling. One or two of them ran the risk of losing their heads, only for intimating their fears about his health. It was

prognosticating his death, and amounted nearly to high-treason.

Disease at length subdued this brutal spirit. When he was now almost in the article of death, Sir Anthony Denny ventured to hint, with great delicacy, that his physicians thought his majesty's life in some danger. Henry took the admonition patiently, for he felt nature speaking a less ceremonious language within. He was just able to order the archbishop to be called.

When the primate came, he found the king speechless, extended on a couch, his eyes glazed and motionless. His attendants had ventured now to throw off all disguise; and the real sentiments of the heart, on this great occasion, were visible on every enlightened countenance. The archbishop's sensations were very different. His were the painful feelings, which arise from pity mingled with a high sense of gratitude, where there could be no real esteem; and where, in an hour of the greatest distress, there was no possibility of being of service. With an eye melting in tenderness, he leaned over the dying king; and sympathized with every pang. Henry did not yet seem entirely deprived of intellect. The primate begged him to give some sign of his dying in the faith of Christ. Henry made an effort to grasp his hand, and expired.

SECTION XIII.

The death of Henry, which happened in the year 1547, opened a new scene. On producing his will, it appeared that sixteen of the leading men of the kingdom were appointed regents. They were restrained by many limitations; but under these, a majority were allowed *to govern the kingdom as they thought fit*. This happy clause overturned all the rest. Henry had composed the regents as equally

as he could, of both parties in religion ; and hoped, that by keeping things, during his son's minority, in the same hesitating situation, in which he had left them, he might prevent their running into extremes. But it happened otherwise. A majority plainly inclined to the protestant cause, either from conscience, or interest ; and they thought themselves fully authorized by the precept of the will, *to govern the kingdom as they thought fit*. The earl of Hertford, the king's uncle, was created duke of Somerset, and chosen protector. The other regents immediately became cyphers.

The archbishop, though placed at the head of the regency, rarely interfered with state affairs ; and gave little interruption to the ambition of his compeers. In ecclesiastical matters he took the lead ; and every thing that was done in this department, during Edward's reign, may be considered as done by his authority.

But it would interfere too much with the nature of such a work as this, to enter into a minute detail of all the changes, which were made in religion. Such a detail appears more properly in works appropriated to these inquiries *. Here it is proposed only to illustrate the character of this excellent prelate ; and it will be enough to touch so far on the changes he made, as to throw a proper light on his wisdom, prudence, learning, moderation, and firmness.

The first step he took, regarded the settlement of the supremacy ; a point which he had exceedingly at heart, as the foundation of every thing else. He formally therefore petitioned the young king, that as he had exercised the office of archbishop under his father, he might be permitted to exercise it under him : and he would perform no episcopal duty, till his new licence was made out.—

* See Jewell's Apology, Burnet's Hist. of the Reform. Heylin's Eccles. Hist. &c.

This example he proposed should be enforced on the clergy.

Thus authorized, he proceeded to the affairs of religion. But before any thing was done, he thought it right to shew the necessity of doing something: and to this purpose a general visitation was made. Abuses of all kinds were inquired into—corrupt doctrines; corrupt practices; superstitious ceremonies; the lives of the clergy; and the manners of the laity. The visitors had authority to proceed a step farther. In flagrant cases a few censures were passed; and a few injunctions given. The idea was to restrain, rather than to abolish the old system.

Among other things it was thought expedient to suspend preaching. Amidst the licence of the times, no species of it deserved more reproof, than that which had gotten possession of the pulpit. Many of the monks had been secularized; and bringing with them into their churches their old monastic ideas, the popular divinity of those times was, if possible, more opposite to Scripture, and more offensive to common sense, than it had ever been in the darkest reign of popery. In the room of preaching, a book of homilies was published, and ordered to be read in churches. The use of Scripture also was allowed; and that the people might have an explanation of it at hand, the commentary of Erasmus was authorized.—These changes had great efficacy; moderate as they appeared, and aiming rather to undermine the foundations of popery, than to overturn them by any open assault.

The minds of the people indeed were, in a good degree, prepared for them; and it is said, nothing contributed more to loosen their prejudices, than a popular paper, which was published, about the close of the late reign, intitled, *The supplication of the poor commons to the king*. It was levelled chiefly at the ignorance and immorality of the Romish clergy;

and being written in a masterly manner, and interspersed with a variety of lively anecdotes, it was much read; and tended greatly to give the people just ideas of the clerical office. Among other stories, the following very curious one is related. "A certain court-chaplain, who had great preferment, observed, as he was travelling, a church upon a fair hill, beset with groves and fields, the green meadows lying beneath on the banks of a river, garished with willows, poplars, and alders. He was mightily taken with the place, and calling out to his servant, Robin, said he, this benefice standeth pleasantly. I would it were mine. Why Sir, said his servant, it is yours; and immediately named the parish—If your highness had so many swine in this realm as you have men, would you commit the keeping of them to such swine-herds, as did not know their swine cots, when they saw them?"

The dread in which the Romish clergy were at that time thrown, from what had been already done, is strongly expressed in the following language. "These dumb dogs have learned to fawn upon them who bring them bread; and to be wonderful frisky when they are cherished: but if they be once bid to *couch*, they draw the tail between their legs, and get them strait to their kennel: and then come who will, they stir no more, till they hear their sire pope cry out, hey, cut, or long tail. So afraid are they of stripes, and lest they should be tied up so short, that they cannot range abroad; nor worry, now and then, a lamb."

Then follows a long account of their rapacity, of which many instances are given. Among others, we are told, "it was no rare thing to see poor people beg at Easter, to pay for the sacrament when they receive it. Nor is it less common to see men beg for dead bodies, that they may pay the priest's dues. It is not long since, in the city of London, a dead body was brought to the church to be buried; being

so poor, that it was almost quite naked. But these charitable men, who teach us, that it is one of the works of mercy to bury the dead, would not bury this dead corpse, without their dues. So they caused it to be carried into the street, till the poor people, who dwelled there, begged so much as the dues came to."

The apostrophe of these suppliants to the king, was very noble and spirited. "If you suffer Christ's poor members to be thus oppressed, expect the righteous judgment of God for your negligence. Be merciful therefore to yourself, as well as to us. Endanger not your own soul by the suffering of us poor commons. Remember that your hoar hairs are a token, that nature maketh haste to absolve your life. Defer not then, most dread sovereign, the reformation of these enormities. For the wound is even unto death. Whoredom is more esteemed than wedlock. Simony hath lost its name. Usury is lawful gains. What example of life do the people shew this day, which declares us more to be the people of God, than Jews and Mahometans;"

The leaders of the popish party easily saw the tendency of the primate's measures; and gave them what opposition they were able. The bishop of Winchester never appeared in a more becoming light. With equal firmness and plausibility he remonstrated. "The commencement of a minority, he said, was not a time to introduce novelties. To alter the religion of a country was a serious business; and required the utmost deliberation. No act of legislature, he observed, had yet passed; and it was great presumption to publish things under the king's name, with which it was well known neither he nor the protector were at all acquainted. But even if bare decency were consulted, it was very offensive to all sober men to see the wisdom of ages cancelled in a few months.—The paraphrase of Erasmus, he remarked, was written at a time when

the pen of that writer was very licentious. It contained many points of doctrine, which he presumed the protestants themselves would not willingly inculcate; and he would maintain, that it contradicted the homilies in many particulars. As for the homilies, though he did not doubt their being well intended, yet they were certainly very inaccurate compositions; and ran into length on many curious points of doctrine, which tended rather to mislead, than to inform the people.—For himself he said, he was careless of all consequences, which the freedom of his speech might draw upon him. The last scene of his life was now on the stage; and he only wished to conclude it properly.”

There was an energy and greatness in this language, superior to any thing that had ever fallen from Gardiner: and if that had been the last scene of his life, we must have acknowledged the dignity of its conclusion. In his objections also, there was more than a shew of reasoning; and the promoters of reformation had but an indifferent ground for a defence. They answered with the plainness and simplicity of honest men (which was the best defence they could make), that they were assured their amendments were right on the whole; and that if some things were objectionable, these two should be amended as soon as possible.

This was a better answer, and more in the spirit of reformation, than their replying, as they afterwards did, to the arguments of Winchester, by throwing him into prison. This violent measure may well be reckoned among the errors of those times. The archbishop indeed, does not appear to have had any hand in this affair. It issued solely from the council; and was intended probably to remove Winchester from the parliament, which was then about to be assembled. In every light, political or religious, it was a harsh discordant measure; and very unworthy of the liberal cause which it was intended to serve.

SECTION XIV.

On the 4th of November, 1547, about nine months after Henry's death, a parliament was assembled; and the leaders of the protestant cause hoped to make it the instrument of still more essential alterations than any they had yet made. Indeed the bias of the nation leaned more to this side. Such a change appeared in the opinions of men, since the last parliament of Henry, that no one could imagine the two assemblies were composed of the same people. In every debate the protestant took the lead; and drew over a majority. In that age of novelty, when the general principles of men were unfixed, it was an easy matter to persuade those, who were incapable of rational inquiry. The convocation, animated by the archbishop, shewed the same spirit; and digested business for the parliament. The act of the six articles was repealed: communion in both kinds was allowed; tradition was discredited; lent was considered as a political institution: the liturgy was ordered to be new modelled; an easy catechism to be framed; and the canon law to be reformed.

These things however were not all done at this time: but I mention them together as the principal acts of parliament and of convocation, during this short reign.

In framing the catechism, and new modelling the liturgy, and the canon law, the archbishop had the chief hand. The last indeed he had attempted in the late reign: but the prevalence of the popish party obliged him to leave that useful work unfinished. He now undertook it in earnest: and not being satisfied with making it an accurate and judicious performance, he endeavoured to make it even elegant. Dr. Haddon was esteemed at that time, the best latinist in England; and the archbishop engaged

him to revise the language of his performance. Several of Haddon's corrections may yet be seen in the original manuscript; which is still extant in Bennet-college, in Cambridge. *Mulierum a partu*, is altered into *Levatarum puerperarum*: and *cuicunq hoc prerogativum est*, into *cuicunq hoc peculiare jus tribuitur, quod prerogativum vocant*.—But such was the fatality attending this useful work, that it was prevented taking effect in Edward's, as it had been in Henry's reign; it was not sufficiently prepared to be brought forward, before that king's immature death.

The archbishop endeavoured also to confine the office of confirmation, as much as he could to adults. He saw little use in administering it to children. But when people were come to years of discretion; and seriously desired to renew their baptismal vow, he thought the solemnity of such an ordinance, at that time, might make a strong impression.

Some other changes he made of smaller import; but still with that admirable caution and prudence, which marked all his proceedings.

His caution however, did not pass wholly uncensured. Many of his friends conceived that he might have taken hastier steps. The zeal of Calvin, in particular took offence. That reformer wrote his sentiments very freely to the archbishop; and wished him to push matters with a little more spirit. He put him in mind of his age, which could not long allow him to continue his useful labours; and feared, that on his death, an opportunity would be lost, which might never be recovered. The archbishop answered his letters with great kindness—reminded him of the many difficulties he had still to oppose; and endeavoured to convince him of the great imprudence of less cautious measures.

While the primate was thus abolishing the essentials of popery, it may be supposed, he did not suffer its pageantry to pass unobserved.

The frequency of processions was become a great

abuse. Men began to think nothing was religion, but what was an object of sight. This shews how much they have to answer for, who introduce needless ceremonies into the offices of any religious establishment. The minds of the people at the time we are now describing, fascinated with the pomp and splendour, saw with less reluctance the foundations of popery shaken, than the ostentatious ceremonies abolished, of carrying palms on Palm-Sunday, or ashes on Ash-Wednesday.

Mr. Hume, treating these alterations with levity, attributes them to the morose humour of the reformers; and insinuates that it is happy when superstition, (which is generally with him another word for religion), takes this inoffensive turn.—When Mr. Hume rears the standard of infidelity, and boldly combats the truths of religion, he acts openly and honestly: but when he scatters his careless insinuations, as he traverses the paths of history, we characterize him as a dark insidious enemy.

During the debates on these subjects, a very extraordinary phenomenon appeared in the house of lords—the archbishop of Canterbury at the head of the popish peers, and popish bishops, contending eagerly against the whole force of the protestant interest. The point in dispute, was the propriety of granting a large parcel of collegiate and chantry lands to the king's use. Had it been intended to employ this grant in any useful work, the archbishop would readily have given his vote for it: but he knew well what direction it would take; and he wished the lands rather to continue as they were, hoping for better times, than have them fall into the hands of rapacious courtiers. He had the mortification however, to see his opponents prevail.

While this bill was depending in the house, the two universities, which were clearly comprehended in the letter of it, became very apprehensive; and made powerful intercession at court to avert the

danger. Whether the primate interested himself in their favour on this occasion, does not appear: it is rather probable that he did, as we find him interesting himself for them on many other occasions.

They were, at that time, little more than nurseries of sloth, superstition, and ignorance; and not many degrees raised above the monkish institutions, which had lately been suppressed. Many ingenious men, and scholars of great reputation were among them; but they were yet so thinly scattered in the several colleges, as to have little influence in forming the general character of the universities: and they who wished well to these foundations, easily saw this corruption must terminate in their ruin; and desired to avert it. The archbishop always thought himself much interested in the welfare of both the universities, but of Cambridge in particular; and though he does not appear to have had any legal power there, yet such was his interest at court, and such was the general dependence of the more eminent members of that society upon him, that scarce any thing was done there, either of a public or a private nature, without consulting him. It was his chief endeavour to encourage, as much as possible, a spirit of inquiry; and to rouse the students from the slumber of their predecessors; well knowing, the *libertas philosophandi* was the great mean of detecting error, and that true learning could never be at variance with true religion. Ascham, and Cheke, two of the most elegant scholars of that age, were chiefly relied on, and consulted by the archbishop in this work.

SECTION XV.

While the primate was acting this great and good part, and on all occasions discovering the utmost mildness and candour; the truth of history calls on us to acknowledge, that on one unhappy

occasion, he appeared under a very different character, that of a bigoted persecutor. It is very true indeed, that he went not voluntarily into this business; but acted under a commission to inquire into heretical opinions.

When the errors of the church of Rome were scrutinized; private judgment, although the basis of all liberal inquiry, gave birth, as might naturally be supposed, to a variety of strange enthusiastic opinions. Many of these were unquestionably absurd enough; and some of them destructive of moral goodness: as that the elect could not sin—that although the outward man might transgress, the inward man remained immaculate—that the regenerate have a right to what they want; and some others equally detestable.—They were opinions however of a less offensive nature, that drew upon them the archbishop's severity.

Joan Bocher, and George Paris, were accused, though at different times, one for denying the humanity of Christ, the other for denying his divinity. They were both tried, and condemned to the stake: and the archbishop not only consented to these acts of blood, but even persuaded the aversion of the young king into a compliance. "Your majesty must distinguish (said he, informing his royal pupil's conscience) between common opinions, and such as are the essential articles of faith. These latter we must on no account suffer to be opposed."

It is true these doctrines, especially the latter, in the opinion of the generality of Christians, are subversive of the fundamentals of Christianity. To deny the divinity of Christ seems to oppose the general idea which the Scriptures hold out of our redemption. On the other hand, many particular passages which describe the humanity of Christ, seem to favour the doctrine; and some there are, who hold it even in this enlightened age. At worst therefore, we must consider it as an erroneous opinion. To

call it heresy, when attended with a good life, is certainly a great breach of Christian charity. Is it not then astonishing, that a man of the archbishop's candour, could not give it a little more indulgence? If any opinions can demand the secular arm, it must be such only, as lead to actions which injure the peace of society. We are surprised also at seeing the archbishop so far depreciate his own cause, as to suppose that one man incurred guilt by acting on the same principles, which entitled another to applause: and that he, who in the opinion of one church, was the greatest of schismatics himself, should not, even in common justice indulge, in all the more speculative points of religion, toleration to others.

Nothing even plausible can be suggested in defence of the archbishop on this occasion, except only that the spirit of popery was not yet wholly repressed.

There are however, among protestant writers, at this day, some who have undertaken his vindication. But I spare their indiscretion. Let the horrid act be universally disclaimed. To palliate is to participate. With indignation let it be recorded, as what above all other things, has disgraced that religious liberty, which our ancestors in most other respects so nobly purchased.

From this disagreeable view of the archbishop, let us endeavour to bring ourselves again in temper with him, by viewing him as the friend and patron of the distressed. The suffering professors of protestantism, who were scattered in great numbers about the various countries of Europe, were always sure of an asylum with him. His palace at Lambeth might be called a seminary of learned men; the greater part of whom persecution had driven from home. Here among other celebrated reformers, Martyr, Bucer, Aless, Phage, found sanctuary. Martyr, Bucer, and Phage were liberally pensioned by the archbishop, till he could otherwise provide for them.

It was his wish to fix them in the two universities, where he hoped their great knowledge, and spirit of inquiry, would forward his designs of restoring learning : and he at length obtained professorships for them all. Bucer and Phage were settled at Cambridge ; where they only shewed what might have been expected from them, both dying within a few months after their arrival. But at Oxford, Martyr acted a very conspicuous part ; and contributed to introduce among the students there, a very liberal mode of thinking.

Aless had been driven from Scotland, his native country, for the novelty of his opinions. The cause in which he suffered, added to his abilities and learning, so far recommended him to the university of Leipsic, to which he retired, that he was chosen a professor there. At this place he became acquainted with Melancthon, who having written a treatise on some part of the controversy between the papists and protestants, was desirous of consulting the archbishop on a few points ; and engaged Aless, otherwise not averse to the employment, to undertake a voyage into England for that purpose. In the course of the conference, the archbishop was so much taken with his simplicity and learning, that he settled a pension on him, and retained him in his family.

The misfortunes of the times drew Alasco also into England, where the archbishop became an early patron to him ; and shewed on this occasion at least, the candour and liberality of his sentiments, by permitting a person, who held many opinions very different from his own, to collect his brethren, and such as chose to communicate with him, into a church. At the head of this little assembly Alasco long presided ; exhibiting an eminent example of piety, and decency of manners.

Among other learned foreigners John Sleiden was under particular obligations to the archbishop. Stei-

den was at that time engaged in writing the history of the reformation; a work from which much was expected; and which the archbishop, by allowing him a pension, and opportunities of study, enabled him to prosecute with less difficulty than had attended the beginning of his labours.

Leland, the first British antiquarian, was also among the primate's particular friends. Leland had a wonderful facility in learning languages; and was esteemed the first linguist in Europe. The archbishop soon took notice of him, and with his usual discernment, recommended him to be the king's librarian. His genius threw him on the study of antiquities; and his opportunities, on those of his own country: the archbishop, in the mean time, by procuring preferment for him, enabled him to make those inquiries, to which his countrymen have been so much indebted.

Among others, who were under obligations to the archbishop's generosity, was the amiable bishop Latimer; who not choosing to be reinstated in his old bishoprick, and having made but an indifferent provision for his future necessities, spent a great part of his latter life with the archbishop at Lambeth.

Besides this intimacy with learned men at home, the archbishop held a constant correspondence with most of the learned men in Europe.

The great patron of Erasmus had been archbishop Warham; than whom, to give popery its due, few churchmen of those times led a more apostolical life. When Cranmer succeeded Warham, Erasmus was in the decline of age. He found however, during the short time he lived, as beneficent a friend under the new archbishop, as he had lost in the old one.

The primate corresponded also with Osiander, Melancthon, and Calvin. His foreign correspondence indeed was so large, that he appointed a person with a salary at Canterbury, whose chief employment it was to forward, and receive his packets.

Among the most eminent of his correspondents was Herman, archbishop and elector of Cologne. This prelate had been early impressed with the principles of the reformation by Melancthon ; and had used all his influence to introduce them in his electorate. But he met with powerful opposition ; the pope and emperor combining against him, the former in his spiritual, the latter in his temporal capacity. So potent a combination crushed him. Terms indeed were offered ; but he would hearken to no dishonourable compromise. "Nothing, he would say, can happen to me unexpectedly : I have long since fortified my mind against every event." Instead of a splendid life therefore, at variance with his opinions, he chose a private station ; in which he enjoyed the pleasures of study ; the friendship of good men ; and the tranquillity of a good conscience.

SECTION XVI.

In the year 1549, the archbishop was engaged in a controversy of a very singular kind, on the following occasion.

The dissolution of monasteries, having thrown the landed interest of the nation into new hands, introduced also a new kind of culture ; which at first occasioned a scarcity. Mr. Hume, speaking of this matter, with great judgment remarks, "that no abuse in civil society is so great, as not to be attended with a variety of beneficial consequences ; and in the beginnings of reformation, the loss of these advantages is always felt very sensibly ; while the benefit resulting from the change, is the slow effect of time : and is seldom perceived by the bulk of a nation." Thus on the present occasion, the bad effects of a new mode of culture were experienced, before its advantages took place ; and the people expressing dissatisfaction in all parts, in some flamed out into

acts of violence. Among other insurrections, one in Devonshire was very formidable. The insurgents felt the effects of famine, but in an age of ignorance they could not trace the cause. The discontented priests, who swarmed about the country, presently assigned one. "The famine was a judgment for the abolition of the holy catholic religion; and till that was restored, the people must not look either for seed-time, or harvest."

Such language changed riot into enthusiasm. The banner of the cross was reared; and the insurgents, marking themselves with the five wounds of Christ, called their march, *the pilgrimage of grace*.

Their first attempt was on Exeter, which they surrounded with their tumultuary forces. The town was reduced to extremity; but still resisted; encouraged chiefly by a brave old townsman, who bringing all his provision into the street, "Here, cried he, my fellow citizens, take what I have, among you. For myself, I will fight with one arm, and feed on the other, rather than suffer these ruffians to enter."

As the rebels were thus checked by the firmness of Exeter, they employed this time of inactivity in sending petitions and articles to the king, in which they demanded, the ceremonies of the popish worship to be restored—the new liturgy to be abolished—the use of the bible to be forbidden—and, in short, every thing to be undone, that had already been done.

General answers were given to these demands; but the rebels continuing still unsatisfied Lord Russel was sent against them with a body of forces. He fell on them, as they lay before Exeter; and gave them a severe defeat.

But though their spirit was broken, their prejudices continued. The archbishop therefore engaged in the humane part of bringing them to reason: hoping that their sufferings had, by this time, abated the ardour of their zeal.

The articles of their petitions, relating to religion,

which were fifteen in number, the archbishop undertook to answer. The first rough draught of this work, which is of considerable length, is still extant in the library of Benet-college, in Cambridge, and is published by Mr. Strype in his appendix to the life of archbishop Cranmer. It contains a very extensive compass of learning; and is written with great strength of argument: but its principal recommendation is, its being so admirably adapted to the capacity of those, to whom it was addressed. Nothing can shew more judgment or knowledge of the manners of the lower people.—I shall give the reader a few passages from this very masterly work, as a specimen.

The rebel articles begin with the phrase, *We will have*.

“ In the first place, says the archbishop, I dislike your beginning. Is it the fashion of subjects to say to their prince, *We will have*? Would any of you, that be householders, be content that your servants should come upon you with harness on their backs, and swords in their hands, and say, *We will have*?

“ But leaving your rude and unhandsome manner of speech, I will come to the point. You say, *you will have all the holy decrees to be observed*. But I dare say, very few, or none of you, understand what you ask. Do you know what the holy decrees be? As *holy* as they may be called, they be indeed so wicked and full of tyranny, that the like were never devised. I shall rehearse some of them, that you may see how holy they be.—One decree sayth, *That all the decrees of the bishop of Rome ought to be kept as God's word*. Another, that *whosoever receiveth not the decrees of the bishop of Rome, his sin shall never be forgiven*. A third, that *although the bishop of Rome regard neither his own salvation, nor any man's else, but puts down with himself, headlong innumerable people, by heaps, into hell; yet may no mortal man presume to reprove him there-*

fore. I cannot think that you be so far from all godliness, as to desire decrees, which be so blasphemous to God; and so far from all equity and reason. For I dare say, that the subtle papists when they moved you to stand in this article, that *all holy decrees should be observed*, never shewed you these decrees: for if they had, they knew right well, you would never have consented to this article.

“ But now let me shew you, what a miserable case you should bring yourselves into, if the king’s majesty should assent unto this first article. For among these decrees, one is, that *no priest shall be sued before a temporal judge for any manner of cause, or crime; but before his bishop only*. Another is, that *a priest may sue a temporal man either before a temporal, or a spiritual judge, at his pleasure*. I cannot deny, but these be good and beneficial decrees for the liberty of the clergy. But I suppose none of you will think it an indifferent decree; that a priest shall sue you, where he list: but if he had slain one of your sons or brothers, you could have no remedy against him; but only before the bishop. What mean these papistical priests, think you, that stirred you up to ask such decrees to be observed, but craftily to bring you under their subjection; and that you yourselves ignorantly asking ye wist not what, should put your heads under their girdles.

“ Surely, if ye had known these decrees, when ye consented to this article, ye would have torn the article in pieces: for by this article ye would have all the ancient laws of the realm to cease, and those decrees come in their room. Or otherwise, by your own article ye would condemn yourselves to be heretics.

“ How ye be bewitched by these false papists? Why do ye suffer them to abuse you by their subtlety? Why do ye not send them to the king, like errant traitors, saying unto him, ‘ Most mighty prince, we

present here unto you heinous traitors against your majesty, and great deceivers of us, your true subjects. We have erred; and by ignorance have been seduced to ask, we wist not what. Have pity on our ignorance; and punish these abominable traitors.'

"What was in your minds to ask such a thing as this? and so presumptuously to say, *We will have it?* I trust there be not in you so much malice, and devilishness, as the article containeth: but that you have been artfully suborned by wicked papists to ask, you know not what.

"If you had asked, that the word of God might be duly observed, and kept in this realm, all that be godly would have commended you. But as you ask Romish decrees to be observed, there is no godly Englishman, that will consent to your article. But clean contrary, a great number of godly persons within this realm, for the love of God, be daily humble suitors to the king's majesty, that he will weed out of his realm all popish decrees, laws, and canons, and whatsoever else is contrary to God's word. And is any of you so far from reason, as to think he will hearken to you, who say, *We will have Romish laws;* and turn his ear from them, who are humble suitors for *God's word?*"

From these few extracts, which are taken from the archbishop's answer to the first article, the reader may judge, in how admirable a way he answered the remaining fourteen. The whole work indeed may be a model to those, who wish to make themselves masters of that mode of reasoning, which is adapted to the people.

SECTION XVII.

The extensive correspondence abroad, in which the archbishop was engaged, and the many applications, he received from all parts, put him, at this time,

(about the year 1546) on a scheme, which he had greatly at heart—the union of all the protestant churches in Europe.

They were all united against the pretensions of the church of Rome: but in no other point were they perfectly harmonious. Their widest differences however regarded the sacraments, divine decrees, and church government. On each of these heads they held their several opinions with obstinacy enough on all sides.

Of these dissensions the papists took the advantage. “Let the protestants alone, (was the cry) they will soon quarrel with the same acrimony among themselves, which they have already shewn towards us: and it will presently appear; that there can be no criterion of religion; nor peace to Christendom, but in the bosom of a mother-church.”

Such sarcastic reflections hurt the archbishop; as he conceived they injured religion. He earnestly wished therefore to remove this block of offence; and to give the cause he revered, that support, which next to truth, he thought union alone could give it. How noble would be the coalition, he would say, if all the members of protestantism should unite in one mode of church government; and in one confession of faith!

In the southern parts of France, in Holland, and in Germany, the reformation flourished chiefly under Calvin, Bullinger, and Melancthon. To these eminent reformers the archbishop applied with much earnestness; intreating them to join their endeavours with his, in forwarding this great scheme; and proposed England as a place, where they might hold their consultations with the most convenience, and the most security. The good archbishop wanted the experience of later times to convince him how great an impossibility he attempted. He was not aware that when private judgment becomes the criterion, it will shew itself of course in different creeds,

in different modes of worship, and in different forms of church government; which latter will always take their complexion from the state.—How little could be expected from this interview, Melancthon's answer might early have convinced him. That reformer, in strong language, applauded the primate's intention, and heartily wished it might succeed. "But, added he, the model you ought to go upon, is certainly that confession of faith, which we signed at Augsburg."—However liberal that confession might be, there was certainly no liberality in the imposition of it.

Calvin seems to have expected very little from this business. He answers only in general terms. He professes that he would cross ten seas with cheerfulness for the good of Christendom, or of the church of England alone; but, in the present case, he pleads his inability; and recommends the whole business to the hands of God.—This reformer saw deeper into the affair, than our good archbishop: he not only saw the impracticability of it; but probably thought, with many other learned men, that if the thing had even been practicable, it was by no means advisable: as different sects would naturally be a check on each other, and might preserve the church of Christ from those impurities, which the despotism of the Roman hierarchy had unquestionably introduced; and which another despotic hierarchy might introduce again.

During the course of this projected union, a question arose of great importance; and which indeed threw many difficulties in the very vestibule of it. The question was, whether, in drawing up a confession of faith, definite or general terms, should be adopted? The primate, with his usual candour, pleaded for the greatest latitude. "Let us leave the portal," said he, "as wide as we can; and exclude none, whom it is in our power to comprehend." He was opposed in this argument chiefly by Melancthon; who, though a mild and gentle reformer on

most occasions, wrote with too much animosity on this; making up in zeal, what he wanted in candour.

Here ended the projected union of the protestant churches. The troublesome times, which afterwards broke out in England, put an end to all farther thoughts of the design; after the archbishop had laboured in it full two years to no purpose.

SECTION XVIII.

But although the primate's moderation failed of its effect abroad, it had fuller scope among the sectaries at home.

When the bible was first opened, after men had so long been deprived of it, they were satisfied with reading it simply, and gathering from it a rule of life and manners; overlooking questions of difficulty in the general comfort derived from its promises; and troubling nobody with their particular opinions. This is ever the golden age of religion. But men soon begin to look higher. The vulgar can read their bibles; and learn their duty. The learned must do something more. They must unravel knotty points: they must broach novel doctrines; which the people must be made to receive, as points of importance: they must contradict, and oppose: they must shew themselves, in short, to be able champions of religion; and fit to appear at the head of sectaries.

Much of this spirit had already gotten abroad in England; and a variety of causes concurred in stirring it up. Besides the different tenets, which began to appear among the English protestants themselves; disgusted papists artfully threw in their subtleties and distinctions: and a multitude of religionists from Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, led by their pastors, brought over with them multifarious and contradictory creeds. It was then as common for men to migrate for the sake of religion, as it is now

for the sake of trade. In a word, all this mass, digesting together, began to ferment.

If sectaries (united in leading principles, and differing only in a few indifferent forms, or speculative points) would keep their opinions to themselves; their differences, as Calvin seemed to think, might serve the cause of religion, instead of injuring it. But the forwardness of teachers in imposing all their own whimsical dogmas on others, instead of keeping to the great truths of religion, is the grand mischief. It is this, which distracts the people; who being thus accustomed to hear a different doctrine every day, begin to think of religion itself, which appears so variable an object, with less reverence.—Much of this intemperate zeal had at this time possessed the teachers of religion; and it became very evident, that practical Christianity had lost ground; in proportion, as the science of theology was more studied.

To provide for the peace of the church, in opposition to this growing evil, the council appointed the archbishop to draw up a set of articles. The affair was delicate. The liberty of private judgment being the basis of the late secession from the church of Rome, every restraint upon it seemed an opposition to the leading principle of the reformation. A restraint however on the clergy seemed to be no breach of liberty. It was only what every church might justly impose. Nothing more therefore was intended on this occasion, but to draw such a line, as would keep pastors within the pale of their own congregations; or at least prevent their disturbing the established church.

Among the various opinions, which distracted men at this time, besides the tenets of popery, which were yet far from being silenced, were those concerning justification, faith, good works, free will, and predestination.

The doctrine of supererogation, and the scandalous sale of indulgences, had brought good works into

such discredit, that many well disposed teachers, with a view to oppose this evil the more effectually, laid the chief stress on faith. The Antinomian pastors, refining on this, denied the benefit of any works at all. This again gave just offence to others; who, to rid themselves of this mischief, ran into the other extreme; and not content with shewing the necessity of good works, they inculcated their meritorious and sufficient efficacy.

Again, on the topics of free will and predestination, the same variety of opinions distracted the people. Some teachers left the will at perfect liberty. Others thought it more scriptural to allow it only free to sin; while good works, they conceived, proceeded merely from the grace of God. Others again, and in particular a sect styled the Gospellers, would admit no qualifying at all in the doctrine of predestination; but resolved all into the absolute decrees of God.

Amidst this variety of doctrine, the archbishop endeavoured to draw up such a set of articles, as would best provide for the peace of the church. It was a nice affair, and he thought it prudent on this occasion, as he had done before on a similar one, to use such moderation, perhaps such well-timed ambiguity, as might give as little offence as possible.

Such was the origin of that celebrated test of orthodoxy, which is now known by the name of the 39 articles of the church of England.—Those framed by the archbishop indeed consisted of 42: but in all succeeding settlements of the church, what was now composed on this head, was not only made the ground-work; but was, in many parts, almost verbatim retained.

In this work it is not known that the archbishop had any coadjutor. It is improbable however that a man of his candour and modesty would engage in a work of this kind without many consultations with his friends: and it is commonly supposed, that Ridley,

bishop of London, was particularly useful to him. Ridley was a man of exemplary piety, and learning; and what was still more necessary in the present work, a man of sound judgment, and great moderation.

The chief objection, at this time of day, against the articles, seems to be their treating at all of matters of such mysterious import. Let us endeavour to settle, as we please, the doctrines of fore-knowledge, predestination, and other points, equally abstruse; we shall find ourselves, at the close of the argument, only where we began. As these deep questions however were the chief points debated at that time, the archbishop was under a necessity of taking notice of them. At this day it is less necessary; and therefore articles accommodated to the present times, would probably be formed on a different plan. Few will think the articles thus framed by archbishop Cranmer, in the infancy of the church, are complete, and perfect: though every candid person will see many difficulties, that would follow an attempt to make them more so. If such an attempt could be successfully prosecuted, no doubt all good men would rejoice in it. In the mean time, they will admire the wisdom, and moderation of that person, who framed them, as they are, in the midst of so much prejudice, confusion, and contrariety of opinion.

One of the most offensive articles, to subscribers in general, is the 17th, on *predestination and election*. But its title is its most offensive part. It is certainly to be wished, that such doctrines had been left untouched; as they seem to be matters only of private opinion. But whatever were the archbishop's real sentiments on this subject, he seems to have been very hesitating, and perhaps intentionally ambiguous, in the imposition of them on others. The severe doctrine of reprobation seems to be strongly disavowed under the pointed terms of *a most dangerous*

downfall, leading to desperation, or unclean living. And how is it possible to hold an absolute election, without mixing with it the doctrine of reprobation, is not easy to conceive. Yet still, as if the article, in the matter of election, had gone too far, it concludes with asserting, that *we must receive God's promises, in such wise as they be generally set forth in holy Scripture.* So that, in fact, the article, fairly analyzed, seems to assert nothing, after all its circumlocution, but that the doctrine of reprobation is very pernicious; and that as to God's election, and promises, whatever may be said about them, we must resolve all at last into a belief of what is generally said in Scripture.

But whatever imperfections the articles may really have; they have been charged with many, which they certainly have not. Of one very great instance of disingenuity I cannot forbear taking notice. It is contained in a celebrated writer on English history, whose acrimony on all occasions, in which religion is concerned, I have already remarked. After throwing out many severe things against the spirit of the reformers at this time, and giving his reader an idea of the articles, which archbishop Cranmer now composed.—“Care,” says he, “is taken to inculcate not only, that no heathen, however virtuous, can escape an endless state of the most exquisite misery; but also, that any one who presumes to maintain, that a Pagan can possibly be saved, is himself exposed to the penalty of eternal perdition*.”

The article alluded to in this passage, he tells us, is the 18th. Now the truth of the matter is, that this article has nothing at all to do with the heathen world, either here, or hereafter. It does not in any shape even hint at them. The early reformers most probably supposed, as all charitable Christians do now, that the heathen world were as much the objects of

* Hume's hist. 4to. Vol. III. p. 334. 1st edition.

God's mercy, as Christians themselves ; and that Christ, who is called the *lamb, slain from the foundation of the world*, died for their sins, as well as ours : The article barely asserts, that no religion can promise salvation to mankind, except the Christian ; which is so far from damning Pagans, that it virtually implies, Christ died for them, as well as for us.

SECTION XIX.

Nor was this good prelate so entirely engrossed by his cares for the general welfare of the church, as not to pay a close attention to the particular affairs of his own province. He made himself well acquainted with the characters of all the clergy in his district. His visitations were not things of course ; but strict scrutinies into the state of ministers, and their parishes. In disposing of his benefices, he endeavoured, as much as he could, to suit the pastor to his flock. After his death was found, among his papers, a list of several towns thus indorsed: *Memorandum ; these towns to have learned ministers*. In these places, it is probable, he knew the people were more than commonly addicted to popery : or that they had gotten among them some popish priests of more than ordinary subtlety, who had misled them.

He was very exact also in the residence of the clergy ; and granted dispensations with caution. He had a strict eye also on their doctrine. To some he recommended the homilies ; and to others proper topics for their discourses.

He himself also preached often, wherever he visited. In his sermons to the people he was very plain and instructive ; insisting chiefly on the essentials of Christianity. In his sermons at court, or on public occasions, he would declaim, with great freedom and spirit, against the reigning vices of the times. His idea, however just, seems to have been,

that the lower orders wanted principles more than practice; and the higher, practice more than principles.

Sir Richard Morrison, a gentleman who had been much employed in embassies abroad, both under Henry the Eighth and Edward the sixth, gives us this character of the archbishop's sermons, of which he was a frequent auditor. "The subjects of his sermons, for the most part, were, from whence salvation is to be fetched; and on whom the confidence of man ought to lean. They insisted much on doctrines of faith; and works; and taught what the fruits of faith were; and what place was to be given to works. They instructed men in the duties they owed their neighbour; and that every one was our neighbour, to whom we might any way do good. They declared, what men ought to think of themselves, after they had done all; and lastly, what promises Christ hath made; and who they are, to whom he will make them good. Thus he brought in the true preaching of the gospel, altogether different from the ordinary way of preaching in those days, which was to treat concerning saints—to tell legendary tales of them—and to report miracles wrought for the confirmation of transubstantiation and other popish corruptions. And such a heat of conviction accompanied his sermons, that the people departed from them with minds possest of a great hatred of vice; and burning with a desire of virtue."

Bishop Burnet also, who had seen the greatest part of a sermon, which the archbishop had preached at court, on a fast day, in the year 1549, tells us, that "it is a very plain, impartial discourse; without any shew of learning, or conceits of wit. He severely expostulates, in the name of God, with his hearers for their ill lives, their blasphemies, adulteries, mutual hatred, oppression, and contempt of the Gospel; and complains of the slackness of government in punishing these sins; by which it became, in some

sort, guilty of them.”—From this account of the archbishop’s preaching, it seems, that whatever speculative opinions he might hold, no man could have a juster idea of the great truths of the gospel ; nor of those topics, on which its ministers ought chiefly to insist.

Nor did his own diocese alone ingross his care. His advice was generally taken in filling up vacant sees in his province. He lived, of course, harmoniously with all his bishops ; and was seconded by them in all his schemes of reformation. He recommended nothing more seriously to them, than to examine candidates for holy orders with the greatest care ; and to follow the apostle’s advice in *laying hands suddenly on no man*.

It was common at that time, when any see became vacant, for every courtier to be on the watch to procure some rich grant out of its temporalities. The archbishop was as watchful on the other side ; and when any scheme of this kind was on foot, he was generally successful in traversing it.

He was commonly consulted also in the choice of Irish bishops. We have many of his recommendations still extant. “ The foremost, (says he, on an occasion of this kind,) of those, I propose, is Mr. Whitebread of Hadley, whom I take, for his good knowledge, special honesty, fervent zeal, and polite wisdom, to be most mete. Next to him Mr. Richard Turner, who besides that he is witty, and merry withal ; (qualities not unbecoming the gravity of a clergyman, if they be discreetly used) has nothing more at heart than Jesus Christ, and his religion ; and in lively preaching of the word declareth such diligence, faithfulness, and wisdom, as for the same deserveth much commendation. There is also one Mr. Whitacre, a man both wise, and well learned, chaplain to the bishop of Winchester, very mete for that office ; if he might be persuaded to take it upon him.”

Nor did the good primate confine his cares even to those of his own country: he extended them to the reformers of all nations, French, Dutch, Italians, and Spaniards, who had fled to England on account of religion. To him they all applied for that assistance, which he readily afforded.—He was at great pains in forming them into different societies; and in procuring churches and little establishments for them; in which, without any restraint, they chose their own pastors, and united in their own mode of worship.

This kindness was afterwards remembered: and when England became a persecuted country, contributed not a little to procure for its refugees, in many places, that generous treatment, which it had once afforded.

SECTION XX.

After a successful administration, the protector Somerset, unhappily assuming too much consequence, exposed himself to an envious party, which had long been collecting against him. It was formed under the machinations of the earl of Warwick, afterwards duke of Northumberland; a man totally unprincipled; guided only by his ambition; and equally versed in the arts of attacking a party, and supplanting a rival. All the protector's friends, one after another, he drew from him by specious pretences; and when he made his first grand movement in the secession to Ely house, he had the pleasure to look round the assembly, and see that scarce one man of consequence was absent, except the archbishop of Canterbury.

Him no arts of seduction could allure. He knew Northumberland's bad designs; and Somerset's honest meanings. Each had ambition: but while that

of Somerset was gratified with a few trivial trappings, Northumberland's dark schemes threatened ruin to the empire.

Nor was the primate merely neutral in this affair. He wrote to the seditious chiefs at Ely-house with such a spirit, as shook their resolutions; and would have broken the confederacy, had it been headed by a less daring leader than the duke of Northumberland. It appears from the primate's letter, that he was more intimately acquainted with those secret springs, which governed their motions, than they could have wished or supposed.

But although the primate's remonstrance probably checked Northumberland's designs, as his first manœuvres seem evidently marked with irresolution; yet he gave way only to attack with greater vigour: and in the end, Somerset, though allied to the crown shrouded by the affection of his prince, the favour of the people, and his own innocence, was unable to grapple with the pernicious arts of this subtle rival; and was brought to the scaffold for the foibles and inaccuracies of his life, which were magnified into crimes.

After the duke of Somerset's death, the archbishop had no weight in public affairs. Northumberland was as little the patron of religion, as he had hitherto been of public peace; and though he found it convenient to make protestantism his profession, yet all men knew that neither it, nor any species of religion, had possession of his heart.

The archbishop and he were never on terms. Often would Cecil say, "Your grace must temporize with this man, or we shall do nothing." As often would the primate answer, "He would endeavour to do his utmost." But the integrity of his heart generally failed in the attempt.

It was a difficult matter indeed, to keep terms with Northumberland. The archbishop had every reason to think him as much his own private enemy, as the enemy

of the public. The ears of the young king were continually beset with the duke's insinuations: and though Edward was not forward in listening to any stories against the primate; yet enough was said to weaken all the counsels, and defeat all the plans which he proposed.

Among the many mortifications which he met with from Northumberland, it went nearest his heart to see the little care that was taken in filling vacant sees, and other great benefices of the church. His own recommendations of proper persons had little weight; and he was grieved to find all those low interests prevailing, which would of course introduce great indifference among the ministers of religion. It was the constant endeavour of Northumberland to keep the king as little as possible acquainted with business of every kind; and as much out of the way of those who were likely to give him information. Among all the old ministers, none but Cecil had access to the cabinet—Cecil, whose courtly arts carried him to the very limits of sincerity—perhaps rather beyond them. With him the archbishop intrusted a list of such persons as he thought most proper to succeed to any vacancy; and the wary minister, by observing opportunities, obtained preferment for many of them.

The last affair of a public nature, in which the archbishop was engaged during this short reign, was the exclusion of the princess Mary, in favour of Lady Jane Grey. Friend as he was to the reformation, he opposed this violent measure with all his might; and pleaded the oath he had taken in favour of the princess. The whole power of Northumberland had no weight with him. The king himself, who had been wrought into a thorough conviction of the utility of excluding his sister, assailed him with every argument that tenderness and affection could suggest. The primate's constancy at length gave way; and he consented to hear the matter explained

by the judges of the realm. The judges of the realm with great learning shewed him, that his late oath could not lawfully bind him. The archbishop modestly professed his ignorance of law, and took a new one: while the friends of his memory wish they had any veil to throw over his conduct in this discreditable affair; which became afterwards indeed a source of the deepest affliction to himself.

Northumberland's great plan was now matured. The king, who had thus far been an instrument, became from this time an incumbrance; and was laid aside with as little ceremony, as if he had been an actor in a drama. Thus at least run the suspicions of history.

The king's death was a very severe affliction to the archbishop, not only as a public calamity; but as a private loss. The archbishop was his godfather, and loved him with a parent's affection; and though his high station would not allow him to take any part in the prince's education, yet Cheke, and all his other tutors, thought themselves in some degree accountable to the archbishop: and used to acquaint him with the progress of their royal pupil. We have a letter from Dr. Cox still preserved, in which he tells the archbishop, in the language of the times, "that the prince discovered great towardness, and all honest qualities: that he should be taken as a singular gift of God: that he read Cato, Vives, and Esop; and that he conned very pleasantly."

Erasmus's character of him is rather curious. Erasmus seems to have known little more, than that he was a very modest boy. But as he was a king likewise, the panegyrist thought it proper to cloath his sentiment (for he had but one) in great pomp, and variety of expression. "*Senex juvenis convictu, factus sum melior, ac sobrietatem, temperantiam, verecundiam, linguæ moderationem, modestiam, pudicitiam, integritatem, quam juvenis a sene discere debuerat, a juvene senex didici.*"

SECTION XXI.

After the death of Edward, which happened in the summer of the year 1553, we find the archbishop engaged in all the irresolute measures, succeeding that period, till the settlement of Mary. With the commencement of her reign his troubles began.

When he observed the turn which affairs were likely to take, one of the first things he did, was to order his steward to pay every farthing that he owed; saying, "In a short time perhaps we may not be able." When the accounts and receipts were brought to him, "I thank God," said he, "I am now mine own man; and with God's help am able to answer all the world, and all worldly adversities."

He was first assaulted, as is usual, by calumny and invective. A thousand stories were propagated: which were founded commonly on some little known circumstance or occurrence; and half the story being true, gave a degree of credit to the other half, which was false. Many of these reports he suffered to die away unnoticed; leaving his life and actions to confute them. But one, which concerned the interests of religion, he thought it proper to obviate in a public manner. The affair was this.

Mass, it seems, had been said in the cathedral church of Canterbury by some zealous priest immediately on the change of government; and the report ran, that it had been done by the archbishop's order; as indeed, before any thing was legally altered, it could not well be supposed otherwise. Many people believed it, who were much hurt with it; and the primate was surprised to find with what malicious expedition, a story, so wholly opposite to the character he had ever maintained, could circulate, not only among his enemies, but among his friends.

He determined therefore to stop it; and immediately drew up and published a declaration, in which he expressed his abhorrence of the Mass as a species of idolatry—and professed his entire approbation of all the changes that had been made in the last reign. This paper was considered, by the advocates for reformation, as an instance of true Christian fortitude, well becoming the first protestant ecclesiastic. By worldly men it was looked on as a piece of indiscreet and intemperate zeal *.

It was however more than the temper of the government could bear. The archbishop was called before the Star-chamber, severely questioned, and thrown into the Tower. The objected crime was treason: but his late bold declaration had at least precipitated the measure. The parliament made no difficulty in attainting him: and indeed his compliance in the affair of Lady Jane, was a very justifiable foundation for an attainder.

This was a measure which was little expected by the archbishop; and touched him nearer than any thing could have done. If he had suffered for his doctrines, he might have had the comfort of a good conscience; but to suffer as an evil doer, was a mortification he could not bear.

It was true indeed, that the queen had pardoned many who were more concerned in the late settlement of the crown in favour of Lady Jane, than he had been. Few indeed, who were at all obnoxious, could be less so: and his services to Mary, in the time of her father, which were frequent and disinterested, deserved surely a grateful remembrance. But his remonstrances, though couched in the humblest, and most penitent language, had for some time no effect. At length however he obtained his pardon;

• “It was by his own indiscreet zeal, that he brought on himself the first violence and persecution.”

Hume's reign of Mary. Chap. I.

most probably because it was more agreeable to the genius of the government, that he should suffer for heresy, than for treason. On the former pretence, he was still confined.

He might however have avoided question either on the one account or the other, if he could have prevailed with himself to leave the kingdom, as many church-men had done. Even after his imprisonment he might probably have found the means of an escape. Some indeed imagined it was what his greatest enemies desired, as the easiest means of getting the disposal of the see of Canterbury, But from the beginning he never would think of flight; and all the persuasions and tears of his friends were ineffectual. "Had I been in any other station, (he would say) except this, in which providence hath placed me, I should certainly have fled. I approve the flight of others. If we are persecuted in one city, we are authorized to fly to another. But I am the only person in the kingdom, who cannot do it with decency. I have had the principal hand in all the changes of the last reign, and I cannot, without great impropriety, avoid appearing in their defence."

The gloomy temper of the government, in the meanwhile became wholly apparent. So much violence attended every proceeding in which religion was concerned, that it was easy to foresee, no measures either of charity, or of decency, would be observed. The queen delighted in being called a virgin, sent from heaven to revenge the cause of God. Under such a title, nothing but bigotry, superstition, and all their dire effects could be expected.

How well Gardiner, who was her chief minister, was qualified to correct the sternness of her temper, may be conceived from an anecdote, still preserved among the gross improprieties of those times. His almoner going one day to the Fleet-prison, then full of protestants, with a basket of bread from the bishop, forbade the keeper, at his peril, to give one

morsel of it to any of the heretics : If you do, added he, " my lord will certainly do you some shrewd turn."

Rigorous however as Mary was in matters of religion, in state matters she was lenient enough. No blood was shed, but of those whose offences placed them clearly beyond mercy.

The duke of Northumberland was the first victim; than whom no man ever suffered more unlamented.

The archbishop had the satisfaction to hear that his friend Sir Thomas Palmer, died in the protestant faith; though he had been persuaded, with other state-prisoners to hear mass.

Palmer was one of the best bred men of the age in which he lived. To his accomplishments, both natural and acquired, he had added the advantages of foreign travel, which was rare in those days. His youth had been spent with too much licence; and he had been greatly misled by the insidious arts of Northumberland; but in other respects he was well esteemed; and in his latter life especially, seems to have added the virtues of a Christian, to the accomplishments of a gentleman. " I have learned more (said he, as he stood on the scaffold) in a dark corner of the Tower, than in travelling round Europe." Then walking up to the axe, stained with the blood of Northumberland, who had just suffered, " I thank God, (said he) I am not afraid to die."

SECTION XXII.

While this scene of blood was acting, the archbishop continued in the Tower, still unmolested, The lenity of the government towards him, was matter of general surprize; as the public commonly supposed he would have been the first victim. But many things remained yet to be adjusted. The great point however was to give a triumph to popery in a public disputation.

In the year 1553, a convocation met at St. Paul's, by the queen's order, to settle the doctrine of the real presence by a fair and candid disquisition. Weston, dean of Westminster, was chosen prolocutor. A few articles were proposed for subscription: and the disputation was adjourned to Oxford; where it was intended that the three bishops, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, should enter the lists with a select body of popish disputants.

These fellow-sufferers were all at that time confined together in a small apartment in the Tower. Their straitened accommodations however were made up to them by the comfort of each other's company. They carried their bibles with them; and on these they employed their prison hours; fortifying their faith, and extracting topics of consolation. These are the scenes, in which we are to look for the triumphs of religion. Where its great principles are firmly rooted in the heart, human joys, and human griefs, and human fears are trivial things.

The convocation had been adjourned to the end of the year 1553; but the several members of it did not meet at Oxford, till the following April. There also, at the same time, the three bishops were carried by the lord Williams of Thame.

From their treatment on this occasion, it was easy to foresee what measures they were likely to expect. They had hitherto been confined, it is true, in a very narrow compass; but as the Tower was then crowded with prisoners, better accommodations could not well be allowed. In other respects however, they had received marks of attention. What they wanted had been readily furnished; and their own servants were suffered to attend them.

But as soon as this new measure took place, they experienced a different treatment. The little baggage they had was stopped; their servants were discharged; they were conducted to Oxford with ignominy; and were thrown into the common jail.

The time appointed for the grand disputation at length arrived. Delegates from both universities joined the members of convocation; and the whole body, to the number of thirty-three, assembled at St. Mary's church. There being dressed in their academical robes, they seated themselves in great state, around the high altar, and the archbishop was sent for. He was brought into the church by the mayor, and bailiffs, under the guard of a company of billmen. They who had known him in his better days, saw him now greatly changed. Instead of that glow of health upon his cheek; that brisk and active step, which shewed the vigour of his constitution; he was now become, through ill-usage, and confinement, a pale enfeebled old man. Clad in a plain habit, with a staff in his hand, he came forward, through an opening in the croud, paying the prolocutor and his assessors, great respect. They offered him a seat, but he declined it.

The prolocutor then addressed him on the happiness of religious unity; and told him, the intention of the present meeting was to draw him, if possible, again to the church. "These articles, (said he, holding out a paper), were agreed on by convocation, which we hope you will have no objection to subscribe."

The archbishop, receiving the paper, joined the prolocutor in a most ardent wish for Christian unity, when it could be obtained, he said, with a good conscience.

Having read the articles which contained the doctrine of the real presence, drawn up according to the determination of the church of Rome; he shook his head, and said, he feared that paper would not afford a sufficient foundation for the religious unity, which all so much desired. He offered however, if the paper were left in his hands, to give a fuller answer to it by the next morning. This was permitted. At the same time it was agreed, that each point of

difference should afterwards be the subject of a regular disputation.

On the next day, which was Sunday, the archbishop declared in writing, his sense of the articles; and the Monday following was appointed to discuss the questions on which the two parties differed.

I mean not however here to enter into a detail of this disputation; which was carried into great length; and at this day would be tedious, uninteresting, and uninformative. Neither archbishop Cranmer, nor bishop Ridley, I think, acted with so much propriety on this occasion, as bishop Latimer. The papists, it seems, pushed them with the authority of the fathers; some of whom talk of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in a language, to speak slightly of it, uncommonly figurative. Cranmer and Ridley, not caring to deny so respectable authority, seem to have been at a loss how to evade it: while Latimer with more Christian simplicity, rid himself of the difficulty at once; "I lay no stress on the fathers, (said he), except when they lay a stress on Scripture."

At the close of the disputation, the archbishop complained greatly of the shortness of the time allowed for discussing a subject of such importance: and wished also, that he might be allowed to oppose, as well as to answer; which was absolutely necessary, he said, in a fair discussion of a question. But he was not heard on either of these points: from which he observed, it evidently appeared, that nothing less was intended, than a fair investigation of truth.

But in whatever light the arguments of these protestant bishops may appear at this day, their Christian fortitude will ever be admired. In their own times it was thought matter of great rejoicing, and Christian triumph. Soon after the disputation was over, the three bishops received the following spirited letter from Dr. Taylor, in the name of all their suffering brethren.

"Right reverend fathers in the Lord, I wish you

to enjoy continually God's grace and peace through Jesus Christ. And God be praised for this your most excellent promotion, which ye are called unto at present; that is, that ye are counted worthy to be allowed among the number of Christ's records, and witnesses. England hath had but a very few learned bishops, that would stick to Christ *ad ignem*. Once again I thank God heartily in Christ for your most happy onset, most valiant proceeding, most constant suffering of all such infamies, hissings, clappings, taunts, open rebukes, loss of living, and liberty, for the defence of God's cause, truth, and glory. I cannot utter with pen how I rejoice in my heart for you three such captains in the foreward, under Christ's cross, in such a skirmish when not only one or two of our dear Redeemer's strong holds are besieged, but all his chief castles, ordained for our safeguard, are traitorously impugned. This your enterprize, in the sight of all that be in heaven; and of all God's people on earth, is most pleasant to behold. This is another sort of nobility, than to be in the forefront in worldly warfares. For God's sake pray for us, for we fail not daily to pray for you. We are stronger and stronger in the Lord; His name be praised! And we doubt not, but ye be so in Christ's own sweet school. Heaven is all, and wholly of our side. Therefore gaudete in Domino semper; et iterum gaudete, et exultate.

Your assured in Christ,

Rowland Taylor."

On the 20th of April, 1554, the archbishop was condemned. From that time a more rigorous treatment than he had yet experienced, took place. It is said, he was scarce allowed the necessaries of life; though it is probable such accounts may be exaggerated. His wants however could not be well answered, if we may judge from an anecdote still preserved; which informs us that he received with great

thankfulness, a small supply of linen, sent him privately by a friend in London.

On the 11th of November following, a new parliament met; which the protestants of those times supposed, was made pliant by Spanish gold. But there is no occasion for the surmise; parliaments in those days had little idea of opposing the inclinations of the court.

By this parliament the pope's legate was invited into England: and on his arrival, the nation was reconciled in form to the holy see; the legate absolving all the perjuries, schisms, and heresies, of which the parliament and the convocation had been guilty.

After this, religious affairs were modelled. The latin service was restored; the use of the Scriptures abrogated: and popish priests appeared in public with that consequence, which the government allowed. Bishop Ridley, characterizing the times, says *Papismus apud nos ubiq; in pleno suo antiquo robore regnat.*

Among other instances of popish zeal, the archbishop was informed, that his book on the sacrament had been publicly burnt. "Ah! (said he,) they have honoured it more than it deserved: I hear they burnt it with the New Testament." And indeed this was the fact: for they burnt at the same time the late translation of the Testament, on the pretence that it was spurious.

The convocation in the mean time petitioned for a revival of the sanguinary laws. They had already been anticipated; and several protestants had been put to death without any colour of justice; and when a member of the convocation, with more candour than his brethren, observed, that the proceedings against these people could not be justified, "Why then," said the prolocutor tauntingly, "let their friends sue for redress."—This parliament however

put things on a different establishment; and the favourers of persecution were now allowed legally to follow their inclinations.

SECTION XXIII.

While the protestant sufferers were lingering in various prisons, a very unseasonable dispute got footing among some of the warmest of them, on the arduous subject of free-will and predestination. It was carried on with such animosity, that confessions were drawn up on both sides; and signed by numbers, who were at that time even under sentence of death. Each party clamoured loud, that their antagonists were likely to do more harm in the Christian world, than the papists themselves; inasmuch as their opinions were as bad, and their example much better. Nay to such a height of phrenzy did their contentions run, that the keeper of the Marshalsea was often obliged to separate them.

During the course of this ill-timed controversy, the archbishop was applied to for his countenance, by the predestinarians, to whose tenets he was thought most inclined. But the prudent primate discountenanced both parties, as much as he could; considering, no doubt, such controversies to be especially ill-judged among dying men.

Nor were the endeavours of others wanting to calm the rage of this offensive zeal. Many of the more moderate brethren endeavoured to set before them the impropriety of their behaviour: and one of them put the matter in a very strong light: "There should be no more bitterness (said he,) in a Christian controversy, than in a love letter." Philpot, afterwards an eminent martyr, wrote a very pathetic dissuasive to them on this subject; exhorting them "to meet each other with the kiss of charity—to reach out cheerfully the hand of peace—to take up their cross toge-

ther, and ascend mount Calvary with hearts full of benevolence.

I give a detail of this strange dispute, both as a curious anecdote of human nature, and as a very instructive lesson. If a speculative opinion could fasten with so much violence, and produce so much animosity in the minds of pious men, suffering together in one common cause, and even in the article, as it were of death—how cautious ought they to be on polemical subjects, who have perhaps less piety, who live at their ease, and are not tied by any of these strong obligations to forbearance.

While the English protestants were thus suffering at home, such of them as had the good fortune to escape abroad, enjoyed more repose.—Among the Lutherans indeed, they met with some unkind treatment. Their liberal tenets, with regard to the Lord's Supper, were very disgusting to these reformers, who still maintained the doctrine of transubstantiation. The leaders however of the Lutheran churches, particularly Melancthon, who was a man of candour and moderation, brought their hearers to a better temper; and instructed the populace at Wesel and Francford, where this inhospitable disposition chiefly appeared, that although the English exiles might differ from them in a few points, they were however embarked with them in the same common cause of religious liberty, and ought certainly to be treated as brethren.

At Basil, John Fox designed and almost finished his *Acts and Monuments of the Church*. The industry of this man is astonishing. He was principal corrector to one of the greatest printing houses in Europe, that of Operin at Basil. But notwithstanding his daily employment, he found leisure to carry on this vast work: and what is still more, though he was not able to keep a servant to do his menial offices, the whole was transcribed with his own hand. From a work of this kind, we are not led to expect any

elegance: yet they who have examined this writer with most accuracy, have acknowledged, that although his zeal may have led him into some exaggerated accounts, where he relies only on hearsay; yet in all matters, where he appeals to authority, or record, he may be fully depended on.

At Strasburgh, bishop Jewel laid the plan of his excellent *Apology for the Church of England*; though he did not finish it till happier times—a work, in which its many admirers found it hard to say, whether candour, and humanity; or sense, learning, and a well-tempered zeal for religion, were more conspicuous.

Here too William Turner, physician to the protector Somerset, published a work, intitled *A Dispensatory of Spiritual Physic*. It was levelled against the papists; and was written with a sarcastic vein of humour. Such sallies of wit and ridicule, though rather below the dignity of suffering religion, served however to divert the universal melancholy, which reigned at that time. Turner published also another work of the same kind, which he called, *The Hunting of the Romish Fox*.

The celebrated Scotch reformer, John Knox, published also, at this time, an exhortation to the people of England, suited to their calamitous state. It abounds more with enthusiasm, than manly sense. Knox had thus early put in his pretensions to a prophetic spirit, which flowed afterwards in more plentiful effusions from him.

SECTION XXIV.

A full year had now elapsed, since the archbishop's disputation at Oxford, and condemnation for heresy. During this interval the spirit of persecution, with a fiery sword in one hand, and a cross in the other, was let loose in all its terrors. The progress however of

this violent reign marks only the Almighty's ordinary mode of providence. When the Christian religion was first preached, the malice of its enemies immediately arose, as if to try, and prove it; and seal its truth by the blood of its martyrs. And now when religion was restored, after so long an age of darkness, the providence of God seemed to direct in the same manner that it should be purified and proved by persecution.

Among the numbers, at this time, who died for their religion, were the bishops of London and Worcester; who were delivered over to the secular arm under a commission from Pole the cardinal-legatè.

As they were carried to the stake, they passed under the window of the prison, in which the archbishop was confined; and looked up for a parting view. The archbishop was engaged at that time, in a conference with a Spanish friar; but hearing a tumult in the street, he came to the window: They were not yet out of sight. He just lifted up his eyes and hands, and sent after the venerable sufferers, a fervent ejaculation for God's assistance in this last great trial.

More ceremony however was thought necessary in the primate's case, than had been used in theirs. Pole's authority was not sufficient. A commission therefore was sent for to Rome.

In virtue of this commission, the archbishop was convened before the bishop of Gloucester, to whom it was delegated, on the 12th of September, 1555. His books, and opinions; his marriage, and invasion of the privileges of the sovereign pontiff, were all summarily recapitulated; and he was cited to appear at Rome in eighty days, and answer for himself. As he did not appear in that time, he was declared contumacious; and a commission was dispatched to England, to degrade, and deliver him over to the secular arm.

Many of our historians exclaim loudly at the ab-

surdity of declaring him contumacious for not appearing at Rome; when it was well known, that, during the whole time, he was detained a prisoner at Oxford. And, no doubt, the thing bears the face of absurdity. But it would be endless to censure, and deride, all the formalities of law, which are pertinaciously retained in every country, after the real use hath expired.

The ceremony of his degradation was performed by Thirlby, bishop of Ely.

Thirlby, in Cranmer's better days, had been honoured with his particular friendship, and owed him many obligations. Besides those of greater value, in the way of preferment, "there was nothing he was master of, (we are informed) which was not at Thirlby's command. Jewel, plate, instrument, map, horse, or any thing else, though a present from the king, if his friend once took a fancy to it; the generous archbishop would immediately give it him. And though many times the doctor for civility's sake would instantly refuse it; yet Cranmer would send it him the next day by a special message. Insomuch that it grew into a proverb, that Dr. Thirlby's commendation of any thing to my lord of Canterbury, was a plain winning or obtaining it."

As this man therefore had long been so much attached to the archbishop, it was thought proper by his new friends, that he should give an extraordinary test of his zeal. For this reason the ceremony of the degradation was committed to him. He had undertaken however too hard a task. The mild benevolence of the primate, which shone forth with great dignity, though he stood drest in all the mock pageantry of canvas robes, struck the old apostate to the heart. All the past came throbbing into his breast; and a few repentant drops began to trickle down the furrows of his aged cheek. The archbishop gently exhorted him not to suffer his private affections to overpower his public. At length, one

by one, the canvas trappings were taken off, amidst the taunts and exultations of Bonner, bishop of London, who was present at the ceremony. The archbishop made some hesitation when they took his crozier out of his hands ; and appealed as others had done, to the next general council.

Thus degraded, he was attired in a plain frieze-gown, the common habit of a yeoman at that time ; and had, what was then called, a *town's-man's cap*, put upon his head. In this garb, he was carried back to prison ; Bonner crying after him, " He is now no longer my lord !—He is now no longer my lord !"

Full of that indignation, which public wrongs, not private, inspired, he wrote a letter from his prison to the queen ; in which he expostulated with her for sinking the dignity of the crown of England to such a degree, as to have recourse to foreigners for justice on her own subjects. He shewed her, with great force of reason, the many inconveniences, which arose from thus submitting to a foreign yoke ; and opened the designs of the clergy, who had introduced, he told her, this slavery again, with the sole view of establishing themselves in their ancient independent state. He put her in mind also of the oath she had taken to her own kingdom ; and of the oath which she had taken to the pope ; and begged her to consider, whether there was not some contradiction between them.—He concluded with telling her, that he thought it his duty to enter his protest against the destructive measures, which her government was then pursuing.

This letter was carried to the queen by the bailiffs of Oxford. She immediately put it into the hands of cardinal Pole ; with whom she seems, on all occasions, to have left the disposal of her conscience. Pole in a letter, dated from St. James's, November 6th, 1555, answered it at full length. His very ela-

orate discourse on this occasion makes the 89th article of Mr. Strype's appendix.

From the time of Cranmer's degradation, the behaviour of the popish party towards him, was totally changed. Every one, who now approached him, put on an air of civility, and respect. Elegant entertainments were made for him. He was invited frequently by the dean of Christ-church to parties at bowls; an exercise, of which he had always been fond: and no liberty, or indulgence, which he could desire, was denied. In the midst of these amusements, he was given to understand, that the queen was greatly disposed to save him; but that she had often been heard to say, she would either have Cranmer a Catholic, or no Cranmer at all—that, in short, they were authorized in assuring him, that if he would only conform to the present changes in religion, he might, if he pleased, assume his former dignity—or, if he declined that, he might enjoy a liberal pension in retirement.

Among all the instances of diabolical cruelty we scarce find a greater than this. The whole rage of the popish party seemed to be centered against this upright man. His soul they had damned: his body they were determined to burn; and to complete their triumph, they wanted only to blast his reputation. With this view, these wicked arts were put in practice against him; which succeeded, alas! too well. Cranmer, who was sufficiently armed against the utmost rage and malice of his open enemies, was drawn aside by the delusions of his false friends. After the confinement of a full year within the melancholy walls of a gloomy prison, this sudden return into social commerce dissipated the firm resolves of his soul. A love of life, which he had now well mastered, began insensibly to grow upon him. A paper was offered him, importing his assent to the tenets of popery; and in an evil hour his better resolutions giving way, he signed the fatal snare.

SECTION XXV.

Cranmer's recantation was received by the popish party with joy beyond expression. It was immediately printed and published; and their cruel work wanted now only its last finishing stroke, a warrant was expedited for his execution, as soon as possible: while he himself was yet kept ignorant of their purpose.

Some writers say, that the recantation was published unfairly; and a modern attempt has been made to invalidate that recantation, which the papists sent abroad*.

But even on a supposition this had been the case, as, in some degree, it probably might, yet a very poor defence can be established on this ground. Cranmer certainly subscribed his assent to the tenets of popery in general terms: and unless the zeal of his friends could rid his memory of that stain, it is of little consequence to say, he did not subscribe them in the detail. A much better apology may be grounded on the weakness of human nature. They, who look into themselves, must pity him; and wish to throw over him the skirts of that tender veil, with which the great Friend of mankind once screened the infirmities of the well-intentioned: *the spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak.*

But no apology could vindicate him to himself. In his own judgment, he was fully convicted. Instead of that joy, which gives serenity to the dying martyr; his breast was a devoted prey to contrition and woe. A rescued life afforded him no comfort. He had never till now felt the power of his enemies. Stung with remorse and horror at what he had done,

* See Whiston's Inquiry into the Evidence of Archbishop Cranmer's Recantation.

he consumed his days and nights in anguish. "*I have denied the faith: I have pierced myself through with many sorrows;*" were the melancholy notes, which took possession of his mind; and rang in his ears a constant alarm. Then would recur, in a full tide of compunction, the aggravating thoughts—that he, who had been chiefly instrumental in bringing in the true faith, should be among those who had deserted it—that he, who had been so long the leader of others, should now set them so dreadful an example—and that he, who had always been looked up to with respect, should at length be lost, and abandoned among the herd of apostates!

Overwhelmed with grief and perplexity, whichever way he turned his eyes, he saw no ray of comfort left. To persevere in his recantation, was an insupportable thought: to retract it, was scarce possible. His paper was abroad in the world; and he himself was in the hands of men, who could easily prevent his publishing or speaking any thing counter to it; if they should suspect he had such an intention.

He had yet received no intimation of his death; though it was now the 20th of March; and by the purport of the warrant, he was to be executed the next day.

That evening Dr. Cole, one of the heads of the popish party, came to him; and from the insidious and ambiguous discourse of this person, he had the first intimation, though yet no direct one, of what his enemies intended.

After Cole had left him, he spent the remaining part of the evening in drawing up a repentant speech, together with a full confession of his apostacy; resolving to take the best opportunity to speak or publish it; which he supposed indeed the stake would first give him. But, beyond his expectation, a better was afforded.

It was intended, that he should be carried imme-

diately from prison to the stake; where a sermon was to be preached. But the morning of the appointed day being wet, and stormy, the ceremony was performed under cover.

About nine o'clock the lord Williams of Thame, attended by the magistrates of Oxford, received him at the prison-gate; and conveyed him to St. Mary's church; where he found a crowded audience waiting for him.—He was conducted to an elevated place, in public view, opposite to the pulpit.

He had scarce time to reflect a moment on the dreadful scene, which he saw preparing for him, when the vice-chancellor, and heads of houses, with a numerous train of doctors, and professors, entered the church. Among them was Dr. Cole, who paying his respects to the vice-chancellor, ascended the pulpit.

Cole was a man of abilities; and was considered, according to the mode of those times, as an elegant scholar. His discourse indeed seems to have been an excellent piece of oratory.

After a proper preface, he shewed the reasons, why it was thought necessary to put the unhappy person before them to death, notwithstanding his recantation. On this head he dwelt largely, and said full as much, as so bad a cause could be supposed to bear. Then turning to his audience, he very pathetically exhorted them to fear God, and tremble; taking occasion from the example before their eyes, to remind them of the instability of all human things; and of the great duty of *holding fast their profession without wavering*. This venerable man, said he, once a peer, a privy-counsellor, an archbishop, and the second person in the realm, renounced his faith, and is now fallen below the lowest.

He addressed himself last to the degraded primate himself. He condoled with him in his present calamitous circumstances; and exhorted him to support with fortitude his last worldly trial.

Cranmer's behaviour, during this discourse, cannot be better described, than in the words of a person present; who, though a papist, seems to have been a very impartial spectator*.

“It is doleful, (says he,) to describe his behaviour; his sorrowful countenance; his heavy cheer; his face bedewed with tears; sometimes lifting up his eyes to heaven in hope; sometimes casting them down to the earth for shame. To be brief, he was an image of sorrow. The dolor of his heart burst out continually at his eyes in gushes of tears: yet he retained ever a quiet and grave behaviour; which increased the pity in men's hearts, who unfeignedly loved him, hoping it had been his repentance for his transgressions.”

The preacher having concluded his sermon, turned round to the whole audience; and, with an air of great dignity, desired all, who were present, to join with him in silent prayers for the unhappy man before them.

A solemn stillness ensued. Every eye, and every hand were instantly lifted up to heaven.

Some minutes having been spent in this affecting manner, the degraded primate, who had fallen also on his knees, arose in all the dignity of sorrow; and thus addressed his audience.

“I had myself intended to have desired your prayers. My desires have been anticipated; and I return you, all that a dying man can give, my sincerest thanks.—To your prayers for me, let me add my own.”

He then, with great fervour of devotion, broke out into this pathetic exclamation.

“O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have mercy on me, a miserable sinner. I who have offended heaven,

* The letter, from which most of the following account is taken, was found among Fox's MSS. and is taken notice of by Strype.

and earth more grievously, than tongue can express, whither shall I fly for succour?—On earth all refuge fails me. Towards heaven I am ashamed to lift my eyes.—What shall I then do? Shall I despair?—God forbid!—O good God! thou art merciful, and refusest none, who come unto Thee for succour. To Thee therefore I fly. Before Thee I humble myself.—My sins are great: have mercy upon me! O blessed Redeemer! who assumed not a mortal shape for small offences—who died not to atone for venial sins—Accept a penitent heart, though stained with the foulest offences. Have mercy upon me, O God! whose property is always to have mercy. My sins are great: but Thy mercy is still greater.—O Lord, for Christ's sake, hear me—hear me, most gracious God!"

While he thus prayed, the people spontaneously caught the fervour; and joined audibly with him. The whole scene was highly solemn and affecting.

Having concluded his prayer, he rose from his knees; and taking a paper from his bosom, continued his speech to this effect.

"It is now, my brethren, no time to dissemble. I stand upon the verge of life—a vast eternity is before me.—What my fears are, or what my hopes, it matters not here to unfold. For one action of my life at least I am accountable to the world—my late shameful subscription to opinions, which are wholly opposite to my real sentiments. Before this congregation I solemnly declare, that the fear of death alone induced me to this ignominious action—that it hath cost me many bitter tears—that in my heart I totally reject the pope, and doctrines of the church of Rome—and that"——

As he was continuing his speech, the whole assembly was in an uproar. Lord Williams gave the first impulse to the tumult; crying aloud, "Stop the audacious heretic." On which several priests and friars, rushing from different parts of the church,

with great eagerness seized him; pulled him from his seat; dragged him into the street, and with much indecent precipitation, hurried him to the stake, which was already prepared. Executioners were on the spot, who securing him with a chain, piled the faggots in order round him.

As he stood thus, with all the horrid apparatus of death about him, amidst taunts, revilings, and execrations, he alone maintained a dispassionate behaviour. Having now discharged his conscience, his mind grew lighter; and he seemed to feel, even in these circumstances, an inward satisfaction, to which he had long been a stranger: His countenance was not fixed, as before, in abject sorrow, on the ground; he looked round him with eyes full of sweetness and benignity, as if at peace with all the world.

A torch being put to the pile, he was presently involved in a burst of smoke and crackling flame: but on the side next the wind, he was distinctly seen, before the fire reached him, to thrust his right hand into it, and to hold it there with astonishing firmness, crying out, "This hand hath offended! this hand hath offended!"—When we see human nature struggling so nobly with such uncommon sufferings, it is a pleasing reflection, that, through the assistance of God, there is a firmness in the mind of man, which will support him under trials, in appearance beyond his strength.

His sufferings were soon over. The fire rising intensely round him, and a thick smoke involving him, it was supposed he was presently dead. "His patience in this torment, (says the author of the letter I have just quoted) and his courage in dying, if it had been in testimony of the truth, as it was of falsehood, I should worthily have commended; and have matched it with the fame of any father of ancient time. Surely his death grieved every one. Some pitied his body tormented by the fire; others

pitied his soul, lost without redemption for ever. His friends sorrowed for love, his enemies for pity; and strangers through humanity."

The story of his heart's remaining unconsumed in the midst of the fire, seems to be an instance of that credulous zeal, which we have often seen lighted at the flames of dying martyrs.

SECTION XXVI.

Such was the end of Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, in the 67th year of his age, after he had presided over the church of England above twenty years.

In whatever point of light we view this extraordinary man, he is equally the object of our admiration.

His industry and attention were astonishing. When we consider him as a scholar, his learning was so profound, and the treatises which he wrote were so numerous, that we cannot conceive he had any time for business. And yet when we consider the various scenes of active life in which he was engaged—in the council—in the convocation—in the parliament—in his diocese—and even in his own house, where he had a constant resort of learned men, or suitors; we are surprised how he procured time for study.

He never indeed could have gone through his daily employments, had he not been the best œconomist of his time.

He rose commonly at five o'clock; and continued in his study till nine: These early hours, he would say, were the only hours he could call his own. After breakfast he generally spent the remainder of the morning either in public or private business. His chapel-hour was eleven, and his dinner-hour twelve.

After dinner he spent an hour either in conversation with his friends, in playing at chess, or in what he liked better, overlooking a chess-board. He then retired again to his study, till his chapel-bell rang at five. After prayers, he generally walked till six, which was in those times the hour of supper. His evening meal was sparing. Often he eat nothing: and when that was the case, it was his usual custom, as he sat down to table, to draw on a pair of gloves; which was as much as to say that his hands had nothing to do. After supper, he spent an hour in walking, and another in his study, retiring to his bed-chamber about nine.

This was his usual mode of living, when he was most vacant; but very often his afternoons as well as his mornings, were engaged in business. To this his chess-hour after dinner was commonly first assigned, and the remainder of the afternoon as the occasion required. He generally however contrived, if possible, even in the busiest day, to devote some proportion of his time to his books, besides the morning. And Mr. Fox tells us, he always accustomed himself to read and write in a standing posture; esteeming constant sitting very pernicious to a studious man.

His learning was chiefly confined to his profession. He had applied himself in Cambridge to the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages; which, though esteemed at that time as the mark of heresy, appeared to him the only sources of attaining a critical knowledge of the Scriptures. He had so accurately studied canon law, that he was esteemed the best canonist in England; and his reading in theology was so extensive, and his collections from the fathers so very voluminous, that there were few points in which he was not accurately informed; and on which he could not give the opinions of the several ages of the church from the time of the apostles. "If I

had not seen with my own eyes, says Peter Martyr, I could not easily have believed with what infinite pains and labour, he hath digested his great reading into particular chapters, under the heads of councils, canons, decrees, &c."

His parts were solid rather than shining; and his memory such, that it might be called an index to the books he had read, and the collections he had made.

Henry the eighth had such an opinion of him, as a casuist, that he would often say, "He could have no difficulty while Cranmer was at his elbow." And indeed we cannot better account for the constant regard which that capricious monarch shewed him, than by supposing it proceeded from the opinion the king had of the archbishop's being so useful to him. It was not an unusual thing for Henry to send him a case of conscience at night (and Henry's conscience was very often troubled) desiring an answer the next morning. On such slender notice, we are told, the archbishop would often collect the opinions of twenty or thirty writers on the subject: and within the limited time would send all the extracts, together with his own conclusion on the whole.

Henry, who was deeper in school-divinity, than in any other kind of learning, would take great pleasure also in disputing with the archbishop; and notwithstanding the roughness of his manners, would often indulge that sort of familiarity, which emboldened those about him, to use freedom with him. The archbishop at least was seldom under any difficulty on that head; while the king on his part always paid much deference to the primate's learning and abilities, (though the primate was the only person to whom he did pay any deference) and would sometimes do it at the expence of those, who thought themselves on an equality with the most learned. The bishop of Winchester in particular, the king would sometimes delight to mortify; and to set him

on the wrong side of a comparison with the archbishop.—We have an instance preserved.

The king once engaged the two prelates in a dispute on the authority of the apostolical canons ; in which he himself bore a part. The archbishop sustained the negative. As the dispute proceeded, the king, either sensible of the primate's superiority, or affecting to appear so, cried out, " Come, come, bishop Winchester, we must leave him, we must leave him : He is too old a truant for either of us."

He was a sensible writer ; rather nervous than elegant. His writings were entirely confined to the great controversy which then subsisted ; and contain the whole sum of the theological learning of those times.

His library was filled with a very noble collection of books, and was open to all men of letters. I meet with authors here, Roger Ascham would say, which the two universities cannot furnish."

At the archbishop's death, the greater part of his original MSS. were left at his palace of Ford near Canterbury ; where they fell into the hands of his enemies.

In the days of Elizabeth, archbishop Parker, who had an intimation, that many of them were still in being, obtained an order from Lord Burleigh, then secretary of state, in the year 1563, to search for them in all suspected places ; and recovered a great number of them. They found their way afterwards into some of the principal libraries of England ; but the greatest collection of them were deposited in Benet-college in Cambridge.

SECTION XXVII.

But the light, in which archbishop Cranmer appears to most advantage, is in that of a reformer, con-

ducting the great work of a religious establishment ; for which he seems to have had all the necessary qualifications. He was candid, liberal, and open to truth in a great degree. Many of his opinions he re-considered and altered, even in his advanced age. Nor was he ever ashamed of owning it ; which is in effect, he thought, being ashamed of owning that a man is wiser to-day than he was yesterday. When his old tenets with regard to the Lord's Supper were objected to him ; he replied with great simplicity ; " I grant that formerly I believed otherwise than I do now ; and so I did, until my lord of London (Dr. Ridley) did confer with me, and by sundry arguments and authority of doctors, draw me quite from my persuasion."

To the opinions of others also he was very indulgent. One fact indeed, mentioned in his life, the death of G. Paris, is a glaring instance of the contrary. Something, no doubt, so good a man would have to say for himself, if we could hear his plea, in vindication of so barbarous and horrid a piece of bigotry ; but as the naked fact now stands, we can only express our astonishment that a single action should so grossly run counter to every other action of his life.

The uncommon caution of his temper likewise qualified him greatly as a reformer. In his conversation he was remarkably guarded. " Three words of his," says Lloyd, " could do more than three hours discourse of others." In acting he always felt his ground as he proceeded ; and had the singular wisdom to forbear attempting things, however desirable, which could not be attained. He rarely admitted any circumstances into his schemes, which ought to have been left out ; and as rarely left out any which ought to have been admitted. Hence it was, that he so happily accomplished the most difficult of all works, that of loosening the prejudices of mankind. Hence it was, also, that the ground which he took

was so firm, as scarce to leave any part of the foundation he laid, under the necessity of being strengthened.

The sweetness of his manners also contributed not a little to the completion of his designs. He was a man of a most amiable disposition. His countenance was always enlightened with that cheerful smile, that made every body approach him with pleasure. It is indeed surprising how much he was beloved, and how few enemies he made, when we consider that his whole life was a constant opposition to the opinions and prejudices of the times. Whom he could not persuade, he never disoblged. A harsh measure he considered only as another name for an imprudent one. When he could not go on smoothly, he would retreat a few steps; and take other ground, till he perceived the obstruction was removed.

The composure of his temper was another happy ingredient in his character as a reformer. It was rarely on any occasion either raised or depressed. His features were by no means an index to the times. His most intimate friends could form no conjecture from his outward behaviour (which was always flowing with benignity) whether he had met with any thing either in parliament, or in council, to disturb him.

One can scarce, on this occasion, avoid a comparison between him and his successor, archbishop Laud. Both were good men—both were equally zealous for religion—and both were engaged in the work of reformation.—I mean not to enter into the affair of introducing episcopacy in Scotland; nor to throw any favourable light on the ecclesiastical views of those times. I am at present only considering the measures which the two archbishops took in forwarding their respective plans. While Cranmer pursued his with that caution and temper, which we have been just examining, Laud, in the violence of his integrity, (for he was certainly a well-meaning man) making allowances neither for men nor opinions,

was determined to carry all before him. The consequence was, that he did nothing which he attempted, while Cranmer did every thing. And it is probable, that if Henry had chosen such an instrument as Laud, he would have miscarried in his point: while Charles with such a primate as Cranmer, would either have been successful in his schemes, or at least have avoided the fatal consequences that ensued. But I speak of these things merely as a politician. Providence, no doubt, over-ruling the ways of men, raises up on all occasions, such instruments as are most proper to carry on its schemes; sometimes by promoting, and sometimes by defeating the purposes of mankind.

SECTION XXVIII.

Nor was the good archbishop less formed for a private, than a public station. While we revere the virtues of the reformer, we admire the minister of the gospel.

His humility was truly apostolical. He was averse to the sounding titles of the clergy; and when these things, among others, were settled, he would often say, "We might well do without them." A familiar expression of his on an occasion of this kind, was often afterwards remembered. He had signed himself in some public instrument, as he was obliged indeed legally to do, by the style of *Primate of all England*. At this the bishop of Winchester took great offence: intimating that there was no necessity for that innovation; and throwing out a hint, as if it were an encroachment on the king's supremacy. "God knows," said the archbishop, (when he heard of the invidious things, which Winchester had said) "I value the title of primate, no more than I do the *paring of an apple*." The expression was afterwards often quoted by those who were disinclined to all dignities

in the church; which they would call in contempt the "*parings of Cranmer's apples.*"

The placability of his temper was equal to his humility. No man ever possessed more Christian charity. The least sign of penitence in an enemy restored him immediately to favour; and the archbishop was glad of an opportunity of shewing the sincerity of his reconciliation. This was so well known to be a part of his character, that the archbishop of York having long, in vain, desired his concurrence in a business, to which Cranmer was averse; "Well my lord, (said York,) if I cannot have my suit in one way, I will in another. I shall presently do your grace some shrewd turn; and then, I doubt not, but I can manage so, as to obtain my request."

But the archbishop's mildness and placability never appeared in so strong a light, as when contrasted. as they often were, with the vehemence of Henry's passions.

A person of great rank at court, who was the archbishop's secret enemy, and had oftener than once done him ill offices, came to him one day to request his interest with the king. The primate with great readiness undertook his cause. "Do you know," said the king, surprised at his request, "for whom you are making suit? Are you acquainted with the man's disposition towards you?" "I always took him, (said the archbishop) for my friend." "No (replied the king) he is your mortal enemy: and so far am I from granting his request, that I command you, when you see him next, to call him knave." The archbishop begged his majesty would not oblige him to use language so little becoming a Christian bishop. But Henry vociferated again, "I command you, I say, to call him knave; and tell him that I ordered you." The primate however could not be persuaded by all his majesty's eloquence, to call the man knave: and the king, though in great agitation

at first, was obliged at last to give up the matter with a smile.

He was a very amiable master in his family ; and admirably preserved the difficult medium between indulgence and restraint. He had, according to the custom of the times, a very numerous retinue ; among whom the most exact order was observed. Every week the steward of his household held a kind of court in the great hall of his palace, in which all family affairs were settled ; servants' wages were paid ; complaints were heard ; and faults examined. Delinquents were publicly rebuked ; and after the third admonition discharged.

His hospitality and charities were great and noble : equal to his station ; greater often than his abilities.

A plentiful table was among the virtues of those days. His was always bountifully covered. In an upper room was spread his own ; where he seldom wanted company of the first distinction. Here a great many learned foreigners were daily entertained ; and partook of his bounty. In his great hall a long table was plentifully covered every day for guests, and strangers of a lower rank ; at the upper end of which were three smaller tables, designed for his own officers, and inferior gentlemen.

The learned Tremellius, who had himself often been an eye-witness of the archbishop's hospitality, gives this character of it : "*Archiepiscopi domus, publicum erat doctis, et piis omnibus hospitium : mod ipse hospes, Mecenas, et pater, talibus semper patere voluit, quoad Vixit, aut potuit ; homo ΦΙΛΟΞΕΝΟΣ nec minus ΦΙΛΟΛΟΓΟΣ.*"

We have seen his character aspersed for want of hospitality*. In part the aspersion might have arisen from the attempt he made, with the assistance of the other bishops, to regulate the tables of the

* See page 56.

clergy ; which had lately taken an expensive turn. This expence was introduced by the regular clergy, who could not lay aside the hospitable ideas of their monasteries ; though a country benefice would by no means support them. The regulations published on this occasion, ordered that “an archbishop’s table should not exceed six divers kinds of flesh ; or as many of fish, on fish days.—A bishop’s should not exceed five ; a dean’s four ; and none under that degree, should exceed three. In a second course an archbishop was allowed four dishes—a bishop three—all others two—as custards, tarts, fritters, cheese, apples, and pears. But if any inferior should entertain a superior, either of the clergy or laity, he might make provision according to the degree of his guest. If any archbishop or other ecclesiastic, entertained an ambassador, his diet need not be limited.—It was farther ordered, that of the greater fish or fowl, as haddock, pike, tench, cranes, turkies, swans, there should only be one in a dish : of less kinds, as capons, pheasants, wood-cocks, but two. Of the still less fowls, an archbishop might have three ; all under him only two.”

Among other instances of the archbishop’s charity, we have one recorded which was truly noble. After the destruction of monasteries, and before hospitals were erected, the nation saw no species of greater misery, than that of wounded and disbanded soldiers. For the use of such miserable objects, as were landed on the southern coasts of the island, the archbishop fitted up his manor-house of Beckesburn in Kent. He formed it indeed into a complete hospital ; appointing a physician, a surgeon, nurses, and every thing proper, as well for food as physic. Nor did his charity stop here. Each man on his recovery, was furnished with money to carry him home, in proportion to the distance of his abode.

To obviate all the cavils of the papists against archbishop Cranmer, would be to enter into the

general argument against them. His apostacy, his marriage, and his opinions, are questions all of common controversy. On the particular miscarriages of his life I have every where touched as they occurred; and have by no means spared them, when they appeared to deserve censure. The general objection which seems to bear the heaviest upon him, is founded on the pliancy of his temper. Saunders, one of the bitterest of his enemies, sarcastically calls him *Henricianus*; and his friends find it indeed no easy matter to wipe off these courtly stains. Without question, many instances of great condescension in his character strike us; but a blind submission to the will of princes, was probably considered among the Christian virtues of those days.

On the other hand, when we see him singly, and frequently, oppose the fury of an inflamed tyrant—when we see him make that noble stand against bigotry in the affair of the six articles—or when we see him the only person who durst inform a passionate and jealous prince of the infidelity of a favourite wife, we cannot but allow, there was great firmness in his character; and must suppose that he drew a line in his own conscience to direct him, in what matters he ought, and in what matters he ought not, to comply with his prince's will.

He left behind him a widow and children: but as he always kept his family in obscurity, for prudential reasons, we know little about them. They had been kindly provided for by Henry the eighth, who without any solicitation from the primate himself, gave him a considerable grant from the abbey of Welbeck in Nottinghamshire; which his family enjoyed after his decease. King Edward made some additions to his private fortune; and his heirs were restored in blood by an act of parliament, in the reign of Elizabeth.

THE
LIFE
OF
BERNARD GILPIN.

SECTION I.

BERNARD GILPIN was born in the year 1517, about the middle of the reign of Henry the eighth. His forefathers had been seated at Kentmire-hall, in Westmoreland, from the time of king John; in whose reign this estate had been given by the baron of Kendal to Richard Gilpin, as a reward for services thought very considerable. Carieton, bishop of Chichester, who wrote the life of Bernard Gilpin, mentions this Richard as a person eminent in his time, both in a civil and military capacity; and gives us a story, told indeed with a fabulous air, of his killing a wild boar, which terribly infested those parts. From this gentleman the estate of Kentmire descended to the father of Bernard, Edwin Gilpin, who became prematurely possessed of it by the death of an elder brother, killed at the battle of Bosworth.

Edwin Gilpin had several children, of which Bernard was one of the youngest; an unhappy circumstance in that age, which giving little encourage-

ment to the liberal arts, and less to commerce, restrained the genius and industry of younger brothers.

No way indeed was commonly open to their fortunes, but the church or the camp. The inconvenience however was less to Mr. Gilpin, than to others; for that way was open, to which his disposition most led him. From his earliest youth he was inclined to a contemplative life; and possessed perhaps as great a share of constitutional virtue, as any man ever had. The observation of these things led his parents early to intend him for the church.

The bishop of Chichester hath preserved a story of him in his infancy, which shews how soon he could discern not only the immorality, but the indecorum of an action.

A begging friar came on a Saturday evening to his father's house; where, according to the custom of those times, he was received with great hospitality. The plenty set before him was a temptation too strong for his virtue; of which he had not sufficient to save appearances. The next morning however he ordered the bell to toll, and from the pulpit expressed himself with great vehemence against the debauchery of the times, and particularly against drunkenness. Mr. Gilpin, who was then a child upon his mother's knee, seemed for some time exceedingly affected with the friar's discourse; and at length, with the utmost indignation cried out, "He wondered how that man could preach against drunkenness, when he himself had been drunk only the night before."

Instances of this kind soon discovered the seriousness of his disposition, and gave his parents an early presage of his future piety.

His first years were spent at a grammar school; where agreeably to the compliment which history generally pays to such as afterwards become eminent, we are told he soon distinguished himself.

From school he was removed to Oxford, where

it was judged learning was most encouraged : though indeed, both the universities were at that time the seats of ignorance and superstition ; and what study was encouraged was confined to perplexed systems of logic, and the subtilties of school divinity. So that the best education of those times was only calculated for very slender improvements in real learning.

At the age however of sixteen, Mr. Gilpin was entered, upon the foundation, at queen's college in Oxford : where we are informed his industry was very great, and easily reaped what knowledge the soil produced.

Erasmus about this time drew the attention of the learned world. With a noble freedom he shook off the prejudices of his education, boldly attacked the reigning superstitions of popery ; and exposed the lazy and illiterate churchmen of those days. Such a behaviour could not but procure him many enemies ; and provoked objections to whatever he could write. At Oxford particularly he was far from being in general esteem. Our young student had however too much of the true spirit of a scholar to take any thing upon trust, or to be prejudiced against an author from popular exceptions. Without listening therefore to what was said, he took Erasmus into his hands, and quickly discovered in him a treasure of real learning, which he had in vain sought after in the writings then most in esteem.

But as he had now determined to apply himself to divinity, he made the Scriptures his chief study ; and set himself with great industry upon gaining a thorough knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages ; in the study of which he was much assisted by Mr. Neal, a fellow of New-College, and afterwards professor of Hebrew in Oxford.

He had not been long in the university, before he was taken notice of. He was thought a young man of good parts, and considerable learning ; and they who were not so well qualified to judge in either of

these points, admired and loved him for the sweetness of his disposition, and the unaffected sincerity of his manners. At the usual term he took the degree of master of arts, and about the same time was elected fellow of his college.

The reformed doctrines had hitherto made no progress in England ; and as Mr. Gilpin had been bred up in the Romish church, he still continued a member of it. But though in appearance he was not dissatisfied with popery, yet it is not improbable that at this time he had his suspicions of it. The writings of Erasmus had put him upon freer inquiries than were common in those days. He had the discretion however to keep to himself whatever doubts they might have raised in him ; and before he said any thing which might shake the faith of others, he determined to establish his own.

He had not long been settled in his fellowship, before a public testimony was given to the reputation he had acquired.

Cardinal Wolsey was now at the head of affairs ; a minister, who not withstanding his many vices, entertained many noble designs. He saw the corrupt state of monkery in the nation, was scandalized at it, and began to think of some method to check its progress. The monastic revenues he was convinced might easily be applied to better uses ; particularly in raising the credit of the universities. He was resolved therefore to make a trial ; and with this view obtained bulls for the suppression of several monasteries. Being thus enabled to carry on his designs, he laid the foundation of Christ-church college in Oxford ; and about this time finished it. But his care extending farther than a mere endowment, he had his agents in many of the universities of Europe, to procure men of eminence, whom he might transplant thither ; and copies of the best books then extant : for he designed that his college should be the means of the restoration of learning in Eng-

land. Mr. Gilpin's character was then so great, that he was one of the first in Oxford to whom the cardinal's agents applied. He accepted their proposal and removed to Christ-church.

Here he continued his former studies; from the nature of which, and the ingenuity and honesty of his disposition, it is highly probable he might in time have been led by his own reasonings to that discovery of truth he aimed at; but Providence rewarded a pious endeavour by throwing in his way the means of an earlier attainment of it.

King Henry the eighth was now dead; and his young successor began in earnest to support that cause, which his father had only so far encouraged as it contributed to replenish an exhausted exchequer, and gratify that pique which he had taken at the holy see. Under this prince's patronage, Peter Martyr went to Oxford, where he read divinity-lectures in a strain to which the university had been little accustomed. He began with the corporal presence; the refutation of which error; as it was one of the earliest of popery, he thought would much shock the credit of the Romish church. This was looked on as a declaration of war. The bigoted were immediately in a flame. "If these novelties prevailed, the peace of the church was at an end—nothing but confusion must ensue—religion was utterly ruined." While this was the popular clamour, the heads of the popish party began to rouse from an indolence they had long indulged, and to set about a more formidable opposition. The chief of them were Chedsey, Morgan, and Tresham; men not unlearned for the times, but whose bigotry at least kept pace with their learning.

The history of this religious war is foreign to our purpose. We are no otherwise concerned in it, than as it relates to Mr. Gilpin. His credit in the university was then so considerable, that we find the popish party solicitous to engage him to side publicly

with them; and pressing applications were accordingly made. But they found his zeal of a much cooler temper than their own. He was not indeed satisfied with the reformers, having wanted hitherto the opportunities of acquainting himself with their arguments: but on the other hand, he had never been a bigoted papist; and had, it seems, lately discovered, through a dispute he had been engaged in with Dr. Hooper, afterwards bishop of Worcester, that several of the Romish doctrines were not so well supported by Scripture as was commonly imagined. While his mind was in so unsettled a condition, he thought himself but ill qualified to espouse either side publicly. His inclination rather led him to stand by, an unprejudiced observer; and to embrace truth, whether he found her among Protestants or Papists. Such importunity was however used with him, that at length he yielded, which was matter of triumph to his party; and he appeared the next day against Peter Martyr.

Entering thus into a controversy against his inclination, he determined however to make it as useful to himself as he could. By bringing his old opinions to the test, he hoped at least he might discover, whether it was only the stamp of antiquity upon them, or their own intrinsic worth, that gave them that value, at which they had been hitherto rated. He resolved therefore to lay aside, as much as possible, the temper of a caviller; and to place truth before him as the sole object of his pursuit, from which he was determined to be drawn aside neither by prejudice nor by novelty.

But he soon found his adversary's arguments too strong for him: they came authorized from the holy writings in so forcible a manner, that he could not but acknowledge them of a nature quite different from the wire drawn proofs, and strained interpretations of Scripture, in which he had hitherto acquiesced. We need not therefore wonder, if the dis-

putation was soon over. Mr. Gilpin had nothing of that pride of heart, through which men often defend suspected opinions; but gave up his cause with that grace which always attends sincerity. He owned publicly, that he could not maintain it; and determined to enter into no more controversies till he had gained the full information of which he was in pursuit.

This ingenuous regard for truth was shewn in the more advantageous light by the bigotry of his fellow disputants; whose inflamed zeal, and fierceness of temper, discovered little of the scholar, and less of the Christian. In his conduct appeared an honest desire of information only; in theirs, the pride of opposition struggling against conviction.

Peter Martyr took notice of this difference of behaviour, and would frequently say, that, "As for Chedsey, Morgan, and the rest of those hot-headed zealots, he could not in truth be much concerned about them; but Gilpin seemed a man of such uprightness of intention, and so much sincerity, both in his words and actions, that it went to his heart to see him still involved in prejudice and error. The rest, he thought, were only a trifling, light sort of men, led into an opposition more by vain glory, and a desire to distinguish themselves, and support their party, than through any better motives; but Mr. Gilpin's ingenuity of behaviour, and irreproachable life, left room for no such suspicion with regard to him; and he could not but own, he considered his espousing any cause as a very great credit to it." He would often likewise tell his friends, "It was the subject of his daily prayers, that God would be pleased at length to touch the heart of this pious papist with the knowledge of true religion."—And he prayed not in vain; for Mr. Gilpin, from this time, became every day more reconciled to the reformers.

Having been thus staggered by his adversary's arguments, the first step he took, after he had im-

explored the divine assistance, was to recollect, and carefully commit to paper, the substance of what had passed in this controversy; and of those points, in which he had been hardest pressed, he resolved to enter into the strictest examination.

But before he could reconcile himself to this work, many distracting scruples arose in his mind. Though he could not but discover something questionable in many of his old opinions; yet when he considered they were still deeply rooted in the minds of almost the whole nation, embraced by the greatest part of Europe, and had been through many centuries supported by the authority of princes and councils, he thought great deference was due to so awful a majority, and could not without much perplexity, think of making his own private judgment a test of the public faith. His suspicions however forced him at length upon an examination; though with a design, it is probable, to confirm, rather than confute his old opinions. But he soon found that to be an impossible task. The more he considered the tenets of popery, the less defensible they appeared. If he tried them by reason, he found them utterly unable to stand that proof; and if he endeavoured to reconcile them with Scripture, he could not but observe, by what unnatural interpretations it was only to be effected.

He endeavoured likewise to acquaint himself with the history of popery, that he might discover in what age its several questioned doctrines first appeared. From this search into antiquity he observed, that none of them obtained in the earlier and purer ages of the Christian church, but were all the inventions of later times, when ignorance and credulity prevailed, and gave sufficient opportunity for designing men to establish any creed that suited them.

Seven sacraments, he found, had never been heard

of before the time of Peter Lombard; which was above eleven hundred years after Christ.

The denial of the cup to the laity appeared plainly a doctrine intended, in corrupt times, to give a mysterious superiority to the clergy. No traces of it could be found till near a thousand years after the sacrament was first instituted.

The doctrine of transubstantiation took its rise indeed sooner; but not however till the eighth century: at which time also the notion of the Lord's Supper being a propitiatory sacrifice was first heard of.

Very late also appeared the doctrine of an action's being morally good, without any regard to the intention to the doer; commonly called the doctrine of the *opus operatum*. It seemed plainly intended for no other end but to enrich its teachers.

Thus, into whatever part of popery he examined, he found great abuses: the true simplicity and spirit of Christianity were gone; totally lost in the inventions of men. But what he first began to object to in the popish creed, and was most disgusted at, were indulgences, prayers before images, and disallowing the public use of the Scripture.

The rites and ceremonies of the Romish church pleased him as little as its doctrines: many of them appeared trifling; many of them ridiculous; and not a few plainly impious. That affected ostentation, and theatrical pomp, which accompanied them all, seemed a strange deviation from the simplicity of apostolic times; and had, he could not but observe, the worst influence upon the people, as it led them from the practice of virtue, to put their trust in outward performances.

They who have been bred up in a purer religion, may perhaps wonder, that a man of so much sense and learning, and especially of so much honesty and sincerity, needed so long a course of reasoning to

discover errors of so gross a kind. But if his conduct may not be accounted for by prejudice, it was however such as will always be expected from a fair mind in the same circumstances. The matter under his consideration was of the last importance; it required therefore the utmost caution. His good sense led him early to doubt; yet, considering what an established creed his doubts opposed, his humility made those very doubts suspected. He knew not indeed how to proceed: he was distracted by a thousand scruples: the fault might be in himself—or, it might be in his religion—papist and protestant could not both be in the right—either might be in the wrong—yet each had something to say that was plausible. He hoped however that a merciful God would regard the difficulties he had to struggle with, and exact nothing from him beyond his power—every thing in his power he was determined to do. Agreeably to this resolution, he went on with the examination of religious matters, omitting nothing that could contribute to his due information.

While he was engaged in this work, an event fell out, which gave the last shock to his old prejudices.

Europe had now been so long distracted by religious dissensions, that it was universally thought necessary to summon a general council, which might deliberate on the best expedients to remove them. This prevailing desire was listened to very heedlessly at Rome. A scrutiny into religious matters was an alarming thing to every true papist. The consequence was easily foreseen; and the prudent pope was very unwilling to have the pool stirred, lest it should be too evident how much it wanted cleansing. But discontent and clamour running high, and nothing appearing likely to appease the universal murmur but a council, one was at length convened at Trent. The pope had now recourse to an after-game. Since he could not avoid this dreaded

council, he contrived however to manage the members of it with such address, that his power, far from being shaken by them, was in fact only the more confirmed. Instead of repairing what was decayed, their only care was to prop the old ruin as it stood. But among all the measures then taken in support of ecclesiastical tyranny, the completest was a bold decree, that the traditions of the church should be esteemed of equal authority with the Scriptures themselves.

A determination of so extraordinary a nature was received with astonishment by every well-wisher to religion. "All opportunity (the reformers cried out) is now lost! Since traditions are equal with Scripture, and these traditions are in the hands of the conclave, it cannot be doubted, whose sense they will always speak. The Romanists have now a fund of authority for all their extravagancies. Alas! instead of stopping the breach, they have now so far widened it, as to destroy all hope of its ever closing again."

Mr. Gilpin, among the rest, took great offence at these proceedings. Hitherto, notwithstanding his objections to popery, there was something in an established church which he knew not how to get over. The word schism greatly perplexed him: nor could he easily persuade himself of the lawfulness of a separation from the church of Rome, corrupt as she was in other respects, while she professed to draw her rule of faith from the Scriptures. But when he found, by the publication of the council of Trent, that she had carried her authority to such an height of arrogance as to set up her own unwritten word against the Scriptures; it was high time, he thought, for all sincere Christians to take the alarm. The designs of the papists were now too plain; and if they meant well to religion, they meant it in such a manner, that a good conscience could not comply with them. For himself, he was obliged to cou-

clude, from this direct opposition of their own authority to the authority of Scripture, that their sole view was to establish their declining power: nor could he otherwise consider popery than as a perplexed system of priest-craft, superstition, and bigotry; a religion converted into a trade, and used only as a cloak for the tyranny and avarice of its professors. In a word, he thought it now sufficiently evident, that the church of Rome was plainly antichristian; and that, as such, there was an absolute necessity laid upon every true believer to forsake her communion.

Such were the cautious steps Mr. Gilpin took before he declared himself a protestant. His more than ordinary candour and sincerity, through this whole affair, met with much applause, and gained him great esteem. Many years afterwards the earls of Bedford and Leicester, having heard there was something very uncommon in his manner of proceeding on this occasion, wanted to be more acquainted with the circumstances of it; and for that purpose applied to Mr. George Gilpin, Bernard's brother, who was on terms of great intimacy with those two noblemen, and then in London. Accordingly this gentleman, taking the opportunity of a visit to his friends in the north, persuaded his brother to give him in writing an exact account of the progress of his change from the Romish religion.

Mr. Gilpin's letter on this occasion is still extant. As it will give a truer idea of his ingenuity and caution in this affair, than any narrative can, and as it hath besides a noble strain of piety to recommend it, I shall here transcribe the greatest part of it. It was written indeed many years after the time now treated of, and touches upon several facts not yet taken notice of; but its reference to the present subject makes this the properest place for laying it before the reader.

“ You require me to write, in a long discourse, the manner of my conversion from superstition to the light of the Gospel; which, I think you know, was not in a few years. As time and health will permit, I will hide nothing from you, confessing my own shame, and yet hoping with the apostle, ‘ I have obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly.’

“ In king Edward’s time I was brought to dispute against some assertions of Peter Martyr; although I have ever been given to eschew, so far as I might, controversies and disputations. Being but a young student, and finding my groundwork not so sure as I supposed, I went first to the bishop of Durham*, who told me that ‘ Innocent the third was much overseen, to make transubstantiation an article of faith.’ He found great fault with the pope for indulgencies, and other things.

“ After, I went to Dr. Redman, in whom I had great trust for the fame of his virtue and learning. He told me, ‘ The communion-book was very godly, and agreeable to the Gospel.’ These things made me to muse.

“ Afterwards one of the fellows of the Queen’s-college told me, he heard Dr. Chedsey say among his friends, ‘ The protestants must yield to us in granting the presence of Christ in the sacrament, and we must yield to them in the opinion of transubstantiation; so shall we accord.’

“ Dr. Weston made a long sermon in defence of the communion in both kinds.

“ Mr. Morgan told me, that Mr. Ware, a man most famous both for life and learning, had told him before his death, that ‘ The chief sacrifice of the church of God was the sacrifice of thanksgiving.’ This was his answer, when I desired to know what might be said for the sacrifice of the mass.

* Cuthbert Tunstal.

“ The best learned bishops likewise of this realm at that time withstood the supremacy of the pope, both with words and writing.

“ Mr. Harding coming newly from Italy, in a long and notable sermon did so lively set forth, and paint in their colours, the friars, and unlearned bishops assembled at Trent in council, that he much diminished in me, and many others, the confidence we had in general councils.

“ All these things, and many more, gave me occasion to search both the Scriptures and antient fathers : whereby I began to see many great abuses, and some enormities, used and maintained in popery ; and to like well of sundry reformations on the other side.

“ Afterwards, in three years’ space, I saw so much gross idolatry at Paris, Antwerp, and other places, that made me to mislike more and more the popish doctrines ; especially because the learned men disallowed image-worship in their schools, and suffered it so grossly in their churches.

“ As I could with small knowledge, I examined the mass : the greatest fault I then found was too much reverence and gross worshipping of the gaping people ; because I believed not transubstantiation. Likewise my conscience was grieved at the receiving of the priest alone. Yet at length I said mass a few times as closely as I could.

“ I reasoned with certain that were learned of my acquaintance, why there was no reformation of these gross enormities about images, reliques, pilgrimages, buying mass and trentals, with many other things, which in king Edward’s time the Catholics (so called) did not only grant to be far amiss, but also promised that the church should be reformed, if ever the authority came into their hands again. When I asked when this reformation was to begin, in hope whereof I was the more willing to return from Paris,

I was answered, ' We may not grant to the ignorant people, that any of these things hath been amiss: if we do, they will straight infer other things may be amiss as well as these, and still go further and further.'—This grieved me, and made me seek for quietness in God's word: no where else I could find any stay.

" After this, in two or three sermons at Newcastle, I began to utter my conscience more plainly when thirteen or fourteen articles were drawn up against me, and sent to the bishop. Here my adversaries of the clergy, whom I had sore offended by speaking against their pluralities, had that which they looked for. They caused the bishop to call me in their presence, and examine me touching the sacrament. The bishop shewed favour so far, I trust, as he durst; urging me nothing with transubstantiation, but only with the real presence which I granted, and so was delivered at that time. For the real presence, I was not then resolved; but took it to be a mystery above my capacity: yet my conscience was somewhat wounded for granting before them in plain words the thing whereof I stood in doubt.

" After queen Mary's death I began to utter my mind more plainly. Before (I must needs confess my weakness) ignorance, and fear of enemies, had somewhat restrained me.

" Thus, in process of time, I grew to be stronger and stronger; yet many grievous temptations and doubts have I had, which many nights have bereaved me of sleep.

" My nature hath evermore fled controversy so much as I could. My delight and desire hath been to preach Christ, and our salvation by him in simplicity and truth; and to comfort myself with the sweet promises of the Gospel, and in prayer.

" I have been always scrupulous, and troubled

either in subscribing, or swearing to any thing, beside the Scriptures, and articles of our belief, because the Scripture ought ever to have a pre-eminence above man's writings.—I remember, when I went for orders to the bishop of Oxford, his chaplain ministered an oath to allow all such ordinances as were set forth, or should be set forth in time to come : which oath when we considered better of it, what it was to swear to things to come, we knew not what, it troubled not only me, but nine or ten more with me, men of much better learning than I was. I, for my part, resolved after that to swear to no writing but with exception, as it agreed with the word of God.—What trouble I had when the oath was ministered by the bishops for the book of articles, agreed upon in 1562 and 1751, I have opened for quietness and discharge of my conscience in another writing.—And certainly, since I took this order to open my faults in writing*, not pausing who knew them, so it might edify myself or others, I have found great ease and quietness of conscience ; and am daily more edified, comforted, and confirmed, in reading the Scriptures. And this I praise God for, that when I was most troubled, and weakest of all, my faith in God's mercy was so strong, that if I should then have departed this life, I had, and have, a sure trust, that none of these doubts would have hindered my salvation. I hold fast one sentence of St. Paul, ' I have obtained mercy, in that I did it in ignorance : ' and another of Job, ' If the Lord put me to death, yet will I trust in him. ' —Yet have I prayed God's mercy many times for

* In another letter he thus speaks, " I never had doubts in religion in all my life, nor ever dissembled in all my life, or committed any fault, which, so far as I thought it might edify, or do good to others, and so far as my remembrance served, I could not well find in my heart to confess before all the world."

all these offences, infirmities, and ignorances; and so I will do so still, so long as I have to live in this world."

SECTION II.

We left Mr. Gilpin at Christ-church college in Oxford, now fully convinced of the errors of popery.

An academic life, affording him most leisure for study, was the life he was most inclined to. He had too just a sense of the duty of a clergyman to be unacquainted with the qualifications requisite for its discharge; and too mean an opinion of himself to think he was yet master of them. He thought more learning was necessary in that controversial age than he had yet acquired: and his chief argument with his friends, who were continually soliciting him to leave the university, was that he was not yet enough instructed in religion himself to be a teacher of it to others. It was an arduous task, he said, especially at that time; and protestantism could not suffer more, than by the rawness and inexperience of its teachers.

These thoughts continued him at Oxford till the thirty-fifth year of his age. About that time the vicarage of Norton, in the diocese of Durham, falling vacant, his friends, who had interest to obtain it for him, renewed their solicitations, and at length prevailed on him to accept it*. Accordingly a presentation passed in his favour, which

* "While I was thus busied, I was drawn by certain friends to accept a benefice, being very unwilling thereunto. If I offended God in taking such a charge before I was better learned, and better resolved in religion, I cry God mercy; and I doubt not but I have found mercy in his sight." Extract of a letter from Bernard Gilpin to his brother.

bears date, among king Edward's grants, November, 1552.

Before he went to reside, he was appointed to preach before the king, at Greenwich. Strype, in his annals, seems to intimate, that Mr. Gilpin was at that time famous for his preaching in the north, and that it was on this account he was called on to preach at court. But there is little authority for this. He does not seem to have been yet a preacher at all; at least, of any note. It is rather probable, the only reason of his being sent to on this occasion, was that he might give a public testimony of his being well inclined to the Reformation: for the heads of the protestant party were at this time very scrupulous in the disposal of livings. "It was then ordered," says Heylin, in his Church-history, "that none should be presented unto any benefice in the donation of the crown, till he had first preached before the king, and thereby passed his judgment and approbation."

The reigning vice of that age, as its historians testify, was avarice, or more properly rapine. At court all things were venal; employments, honours, favours of every kind. In the room of law and justice, gross bribery and wrong were common; in trade, grievous extortions and frauds. Every where and every way the poor were vexed. But in the country this rapacity was most observed, where the oppressions exercised were so intolerable, that the preceding year had seen great heats and murmurings among the people, and some counties even in arms.

Of these things the preachers most in earnest spoke with great freedom; particularly bishop Lamer, who was the Cato of that age. Among others Mr. Gilpin thought it became him to take notice of evils so much complained of: accordingly he made the avarice of the times his subject upon the present occasion: resolving with an honest free-

dom to censure corruption, in whatever rank of men he observed it.

As he thought nothing his interest, but what was also his duty, he was swayed neither by hope nor fear. He considered himself in some degree chargeable with those vices, which he knew were prevailing, and failed to rebuke.—A freedom of this nature the times however allowed: for how little soever there might be of the reality of virtue, there was certainly much of the profession of it: public deference at least was paid to it.

Mr. Gilpin's plainness therefore was very well taken, and recommended him to the notice of many persons of the first rank; particularly to Sir Francis Russel, and Sir Robert Dudley; afterwards the earls of Bedford and Leicester; who from that time professed a great regard for him: and, when in power were always ready to patronize him.

These two noblemen were both great patrons of virtue and letters; but with very different views, and they were indeed very different men.

Bedford appeared at court with all the advantage of birth. His father, the first earl of that name was one of the greatest men of his age, eminent for unspotted honesty, and superior talents in war and peace. His son pursued his steps, and though he wanted his father's great abilities, he was however wise and an honest man, and acted afterwards a considerable part in settling the Reformation under Elizabeth; to whose court he was a very great ornament. He was a friend to merit from the real love he bore to virtue.

Leicester, however accomplished in many respects was a man of ambiguous character. He was however a great master in the arts of dissimulation; and could act, what he always attempted, even the worst part plausibly. He courted good men for the credit of their acquaintance.

These noblemen were Mr. Gilpin's chief patrons—

voluntary patrons, whom no application on his part engaged. He received their offered friendship with humility and gratitude, never intending to put it to a trial. This backwardness proceeded chiefly from an utter aversion to all solicitation for church preferment. The lord Bedford's interest indeed he scrupled not to solicit occasionally for his friends: but he never once asked, though much courted to it, any favour of the earl of Leicester.

Mr. Gilpin is said likewise at this time to have been taken notice of by secretary Cecil, afterwards lord Burleigh, who obtained for him a general licence for preaching. In granting these licences great caution was then used: none but men of approved worth could apply for them with success. Upon looking over king Edward's grants, it does not appear there were more than two or three and twenty thus licenced during that king's reign. Among these were the bishops Jewel, Grindal, and Coverdale.

While Mr. Gilpin was at London, he frequently visited Cuthbert Tunstal, bishop of Durham, who was his uncle, and had always expressed a great regard for him. It is probable indeed, that his parents, in bringing him up to the church, might have a view to the bishop's favour: but Tunstal was at this time in no capacity to serve him.

During the reign of Henry the eighth, this prelate had lived in great credit at court; was esteemed a man of abilities, a good scholar, and an able statesman. His sovereign knew his worth, advanced him to the see of Durham, employed him much at home and abroad; and at his death left him, during the minority, one of the regents of the kingdom. But in the succeeding reign his interest lessened. He was not altogether satisfied with the changes daily made in religion: and though he was enough inclined to give up some of the grosser tenets of popery, yet in general he favoured it, and was always

in great esteem with the Romish party. This occasioned their making him privy to some treasonable desigus; which, in his cautious way, he neither concurred in nor betrayed. The plot miscarried, the bishop was indeed suspected, but nothing appeared. Some time afterwards when the duke of Somerset's papers were seized, an unlucky letter was found, which fully detected his knowledge of the matter. He was called immediately before the council, tried by a special commission, found guilty of misprision of treason, deprived, and committed to the tower.

Mr. Gilpin, having now stayed as long in London as his business required, repaired to his parish and immediately entered upon the duties of it. He failed not, as occasion required, to use the king's licence in other parts of the country; but his own parish he considered as the place where his chief care was due. Here he made it his principal endeavour to inculcate moral virtue; and to dissuade from those vices, which he observed most prevalent. He seldom handled controversial points; being afraid, lest, endeavouring to instruct, he might only mislead. For, however resolved he was against popery, he yet saw not the protestant cause in its full strength; and was still scarcely settled in some of his religious opinions. Hence by degrees a diffidence of himself arose, which gave him great uneasiness. He thought he had engaged too soon in his office—that he could not sufficiently discharge it—that he should not rest in giving his hearers only moral instructions—that, overspread as the country was with popish doctrines, he did ill to pretend to be a teacher of religion, if he were unable to oppose such errors.

These thoughts made every day a greater impression upon him. At length, quite unhappy, he gave bishop Tunstal an account of his situation. The bishop, who was the farthest of any man from a

bigot, and liked him not the worse for his freedom of inquiry, told him, As he was so uneasy, it was his advice, that he should think of nothing till he had fixed his religion: and that, in his opinion, he could not do better than put his parish into the hands of some person, in whom he could confide, and spend a year or two in Germany, France, and Holland; by which means he might have an opportunity of conversing with some of the most eminent professors on both sides of the question. He acquainted him likewise, that his going abroad at this time would do him also a considerable service: for, during his confinement, he had written two or three books, particularly one upon the Lord's Supper, which he had a desire to publish; and as this could not be done so conveniently at home, he would be glad to have it done under his inspection at Paris.

This letter gave Mr. Gilpin much satisfaction: it just proposed his own wish. A conference with some of the learned men abroad was what his heart had long been set on. Only he had one objection to the scheme; he was afraid it might prove too expensive.

As to that, the bishop wrote, his benefice would do something towards his maintenance; and deficiencies he would supply.

But this did not remove the difficulty. Mr. Gilpin's notions of the pastoral care were so strict, that he thought no excuse could justify non-residence for so considerable a time as he intended to be abroad. He could not therefore think of supporting himself with any part of the income of his living. However, abroad he was determined to go; and resolved, if he staid the shorter time, to rely only upon his frugal management of the little money he had; and to leave the rest to the bishop's generosity.

Having resigned his living therefore in favour of a person, with whose abilities, and inclinations to discharge the duties of it, he was well acquainted,

he set out for London, to receive his last orders from the bishop, and to embark.

The account of his resignation got to town before him; and gave the bishop, anxious for his nephew's thriving in the world, great concern. "Here are your friends," says he, "endeavouring to provide for you; and you are taking every method to frustrate their endeavours. But be warned: by these courses, depend upon it, you will bring yourself presently to a morsel of bread." Mr. Gilpin begged the bishop would attribute what he had done to a scrupulous conscience, which really would not permit him to act otherwise, "Conscience!" replied the bishop; "why you might have had a dispensation." "Will any dispensation," answered Mr. Gilpin, "restrain the tempter from endeavouring in my absence, to corrupt the people committed to my care? Alas! I fear it would be but an ill excuse for the harm done my flock, if I should say, when God shall call me to an account for my stewardship, that I was absent by dispensation." This reply put the bishop a little out of humour; but his disgust was soon over, and this instance of Mr. Gilpin's sincerity raised him still higher in his uncle's esteem. The bishop would frequently however chide him, as Mr. Gilpin afterwards would tell his friends, for these qualms of conscience; and would be often reminding him, that, if he did not look better to his interest, he would certainly die a beggar.

The bishop, putting into his hands the books he had written, gave him his last instructions, and parted with him in very good humour. So he took the first opportunity of embarking for Holland.

SECTION III.

Upon his landing, he went immediately to Mechlin, to visit his brother George, who was at that time pursuing his studies there.

This visit was probably on a religious account; for George, though a man of virtue and learning, seems to have been a zealous papist. What influence his brother Bernard had over him does not appear. We meet with him however soon afterwards a warm advocate for the Reformation; to forward which, he translated, from the Dutch into English, a very keen satire against popery, entitled, *The Beehive of the Roman Church*. Upon Elizabeth's accession, he applied himself to state affairs; for which indeed he was now preparing himself at Mechlin, where the civil law was much studied. The earl of Bedford brought him to court; where he was soon taken notice of by the queen; to whom he so well recommended himself by his dexterity in business, that she made great use of him in her negociations with the states of Holland, and kept him many years in a public character in that country, where he was in great esteem for his abilities and integrity. We often find his name in the accounts of those transactions. Molloy particularly, speaking of some affairs then in agitation, makes honourable mention of him. "The Hans-towns," says he, "procured, by an imperial edict, that the English merchants associated in Embden and other places, should be adjudged monopolists; which was done by Suderman, a great civilian. There was there at that time for the queen as nimble a man as Suderman, and he had the chancellor of Embden to second him; yet they could not stop the edict. But Gilpin played his cards so well, that he prevailed, the imperial ban should not be published till after the diet; and that in the mean time his imperial majesty should send an ambassador to England, to advertise the queen of the edict."

Mr. Gilpin having staid a few weeks with his brother at Mechlin, went afterwards to Louvain, where he resolved to settle for some time. He made frequent excursions to Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels,

and other places in the Low Countries; where he would spend a few weeks among those of any reputation, whether papists or protestants: but he made Louvain his place of residence, for which city he always expressed a more than common affection. And indeed it was a most agreeable and commodious retreat for a scholar; enjoying all the advantages of situation, and affording the best opportunities for study.

Louvain is one of the chief towns of Brabant. It had formerly been the centre of a very considerable woollen trade. More than four thousand looms were daily at work in it, each of which employed near forty people. But its trade declining, it grew more beautiful, as it became less populous. Elegant houses were built, and spacious walks laid out within the walls of the town; the river Dyle, which flowed through the midst of it, affording the inhabitants many opportunities of shewing their taste. Upon an eminence at one end stands the castle, a venerable old building, rising out of the midst of a vineyard. Its battlements are much frequented for the sake of the noble prospect they command over the country. The elegance of this situation made Louvain the seat of politeness. Hither the men of taste and leisure from all parts repaired; where instead of the noise and hurry of trade, so common in the towns of Flanders, they enjoyed a calm retreat, and the agreeable interchange of solitude and company. But what endeared Louvain most to a scholar, was the noble seminary established there by John, the fourth duke of Brabant, with a view to keep up the credit of one of his chief towns, upon the decay of the woollen manufacture. It consists of many colleges, in each of which philosophy was taught by two professors, who read two hours each morning. The scholars had the rest of the day to commit to writing what they heard.

At the time Mr. Gilpin was at Louvain, it was

one of the chief places for students in divinity. Some of the most eminent divines on both sides of the question resided there; and the most important topics of religion were discussed with great freedom.

Mr. Gilpin's first business here was to get himself introduced to those of any reputation for learning; to whom his own address and attainments were no mean recommendation, and supplied the place of a long acquaintance. He was present at all public readings and disputations: he committed every thing material to writing; all his opinions he re-examined; proposed his doubts in private to his friends; and in every respect made the best use of his time.

He now began to have juster notions of the doctrines of the reformed: he saw things in a clearer and a stronger light: and felt a satisfaction in the change he had made, to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

While he was thus pursuing his studies, he and all the protestants in those parts were suddenly alarmed with melancholy news from England—king Edward's death—the lady Jane's fall—and queen Mary's accession, whose bigotry was well known, and in whom the signs of a persecuting spirit already appeared.

This bad news came however attended with one agreeable circumstance; an account of bishop Tunstall's release from the Tower, and re-establishment in his bishoprick.

Soon afterwards Mr. Gilpin received a letter from his brother George, intreating him to come immediately to Mechlin; for he had an affair of consequence to communicate to him, which absolutely required an interview. When he came thither, he found his brother had received a letter from the bishop, informing him that he had a benefice of considerable value vacant in his diocese, which he wished he could persuade his brother Bernard to accept;

imagining he might by this time have gotten over his former scruples.

George knew he had a difficult province to manage; but determined to try his influence. He begged his brother, therefore, to consider, "That he could not stay so long abroad for want of money, as he might probably chuse—that he had already offended the bishop—and that a second refusal might occasion an entire breach with him—that if it did not, yet the bishop was now an old man—such benefices were not every day to be had—and after the bishop's death, he was not likely to meet with a friend, who would thus press him to accept a living." But nothing would do: Bernard continued unmoved, and gave one answer to all his brother's arguments, "That his conscience would not suffer him to comply." George answered, "He might have his living as well taken care of, as if himself were there: besides, says he, you have a bishop approving and advising the step I recommend; what would you desire more?" "If a bishop's judgment," said Bernard, "was to be the rule of my actions, I should comply, but as I am to stand or fall by my own, the case is different." In short, George was obliged to desist, and Bernard returned to Louvain, rather vexed that he had lost so much time on what appeared to him so trifling an occasion. He thought it however his duty to give the bishop his reasons for not accepting his kind offer, which he did in the following letter:

"Right honourable, and my singular good master, my duty remembered in most humble manner, pleaseth it your honour to be informed, that of late my brother wrote to me, that in any wise I must meet him at Mechlin; for he must debate with me urgent affairs, such as could not be dispatched by writing. When we met, I perceived it was nothing else but to see if he could persuade me to take a benefice, and to continue in study at the university: which if I had known to be the cause of his sending for

me, I should not have needed to interrupt my study to meet him ; for I have so long debated that matter with learned men, especially with the holy prophets, and most ancient and godly writers since Christ's time, that I trust, so long as I have to live, never to burden my conscience with having a benefice, and lying from it. My brother said, that your lordship had written to him, that you would gladly bestow one on me; and that your lordship thought (and so did other of my friends, of which he was one) that I was much too scrupulous in that point. Whereunto I always say, If I be too scrupulous (as I cannot think that I am) the matter is such, that I had rather my conscience were therein a great deal too strait, than a little too large: for I am seriously persuaded, that I shall never offend God by refusing to have a benefice and lie from it, so long as I judge not evil of others; which I trust I shall not, but rather pray God daily, that all who have cures may discharge their office in his sight, as may tend most to his glory, and the profit of his church. He replied against me, that your lordship would give me no benefice, but what you would see discharged in my absence as well, or better than I could discharge it myself. Whereunto I answered, that I would be sorry, if I thought not there were many thousands in England more able to discharge a cure than I find myself; and therefore I desire, they may both take the cure and the profit also, that they may be able to feed the body and the soul both, as I think all pastors are bounden. As for me, I can never persuade myself to take the profit and let another take the pains: for if he should teach and preach as faithfully as ever St. Austin did, yet should I not think myself discharged. And if I should strain my conscience herein, and strive with it to remain here, or in any other university, with such a condition, the unquietness of my conscience would not suffer me to profit in study at all.

"I am here, at this present, I thank God, very well placed for study among a company of learned men, joining to the friars minors; having free access at all times to a notable library among the friars, men both well learned and studious. I have entered acquaintance with divers of the best learned in the town; and for my part was never more desirous to learn in all my life than at this present, Wherefore I am bold, knowing your lordship's singular good will towards me, to open my mind thus rudely and plainly under your goodness, most humbly beseeching you to suffer me to live without charge, that I may study quietly.

"And whereas I know well your lordship is careful how I should live, if God should call your lordship, being now aged, I desire you let not that care trouble you: for, if I had no other shift, I could get a lectureship, I know, shortly, either in this university, or at least in some abbey hereby; where I should not lose my time: and this kind of life, if God be pleased, I desire before any benefice. And thus I pray Christ always to have your lordship in his blessed keeping.

"By your lordship's humble scholar

"and chaplain,

"BERNARD GILPIN.

"*Louvain, Nov. 22, 1554.*"

The bishop was not offended at this letter. The unaffected piety of it disarmed all resentment; and led him rather to admire a behaviour, in which the motives of conscience shewed themselves so superior to those of interest. "Which of our modern gaping rooks," exclaims the bishop of Chichester, "could endeavour with more industry to obtain a benefice, than this man did to avoid one!"

Mr. Gilpin having got over this troublesome affair (for solicitations of this kind gave him of all things the most trouble) continued some time longer at

Louvain, daily improving in religious knowledge. His own opinions he kept to himself, industriously endeavouring to make himself acquainted with the opinions of others, and the arguments upon which they were grounded.

While he stayed in the Low Countries, he was greatly affected with the melancholy sight of crowds of his dejected countrymen arriving daily in those parts from the bloody scene then acting in England. These unhappy exiles however soon recovered their spirits, and, dispersing into various towns, cheerfully applied themselves, each as his profession led, to gain an honest livelihood. The meaner sort exercised their crafts; the learned taught schools, read lectures, and corrected presses; at Basil particularly, where the ingenious Operin was then carrying printing to great perfection. Their commendable endeavours to make themselves not quite a burden to those who entertained them were suitably rewarded. The several towns of Germany and Holland, finding their advantage in these strangers, shewed them all imaginable civility: many private persons likewise contributed to their aid: but, above all others, the generous duke of Wirtemburgh distinguished himself in their favour; whose bounty to the English at Strassburgh and Franckfort should never pass unremembered, where these things are mentioned. Nor was Mr. Gilpin a little pleased to find, that however unable he was personally to assist them, his large acquaintance in the country furnished him with the means of being useful to many of them by serviceable recommendations.

Mr. Gilpin had been now two years in Flanders; and had made himself perfect master of the controversy, as it was there handled. He left Louvain therefore, and took a journey to Paris.

When he got to Paris, the first thing he set about was printing the bishop of Durban's book. This prelate, as hath been observed, was a very moderate.

man; no favourer of Protestantism, yet no friend to some of the grosser tenets of the Romish church; particularly to its extravagant doctrine of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: and this book, which shewed the moderation of its author, gave much offence to all the more zealous Papists; and drew many severe reproaches on Mr. Gilpin, who was generally supposed to have corrupted the bishop's work. Of what was said his friends gave him notice, particularly Francis Wicliff; who desired, if the charge was unjust, that he would purge himself of it. Mr. Gilpin told him, that was easily done: and opening a desk, "See here, (says he,) a letter from my lord of Durham himself in which he thanks me for my care and fidelity in this business."

While Mr. Gilpin staid at Paris, he lodged with Vascosan, an eminent printer, to whom he had been recommended by his friends in the Netherlands. This learned man shewed him great regard, did him many friendly offices, and introduced him to the most considerable men in that city.

Here Popery became quite his aversion: he saw more of its superstition and craft than he had yet seen; the former among the people, the latter among the priests, who scrupled not to avow, how little truth was their concern. He would frequently ask, "Whether such and such bad consequences might not arise from such and such doctrines?" But he was always answered, "That was not to be regarded—the church could not subsist without them—and little inconveniences must be borne with."

At Paris he found his old acquaintance Mr. Neal, of New-college; who always favoured Popery, and was now become a bigot to it. Mr. Gilpin often expressed to him the concern he had on this account; and approved his friendship, by the earnest desire he shewed to make him see his errors: but Neal was not of a temper to be wrought on.

As an instance of popish sophistry and prejudice,

Mr. Gilpin would sometimes relate a conversation about image-worship, which he once had with this person at Paris. He was observing to him the great absurdity of the Romanists, in condemning idolatry, and yet countenancing such an use of images, as must necessarily draw the people into it. For his part, he said, he knew not how a Christian could allow himself in kneeling to an image; and asked Neal, whether, in his conscience, he did not think it the idolatry forbidden in the second commandment? Neal was for distinguishing between an idol and an image: the images of saints, he said were not idols; and therefore the reverence paid to them could not be idolatry. Mr. Gilpin observed, that in the second commandment there was no mention made of an idol: the prohibition was, "Bow not down to the likeness of any created thing." And what is it, said he, that makes an idol? The workman makes the resemblance of a human creature: the image thus made is no idol: it is worship that makes it one. Hence the apostle says, "an idol is nothing"—a mere creature of the imagination. The distinction therefore between *Latria* and *Doulia* is to no purpose: it is made void by the express words, "Thou shalt not bow down unto them." The very posture of adoration, he observed, was forbidden; and that at least the Romanists every where practised.—To all this Neal had only one general answer: "You may say what you please; but these things are established by the church, and cannot be altered."

This Neal was the man, who, being afterwards chaplain to bishop Bonner, distinguished himself by being the sole voucher of the very improbable and silly story of the nag's-head consecration.

Mr. Gilpin having spent three years abroad, was now fully satisfied in all his more considerable scruples. He wanted no farther conviction of the bad tendency of popery: he saw the necessity of some reformation; and began to think every day more favourably

of the present one. The doctrine of the corporal presence indeed he had not yet fully considered ; but he looked upon it as a mystery, which it rather became him to acquiesce in, than examine. The principal end of his going abroad being thus answered, he was desirous of returning home.

The Marian persecution still raged. His friends therefore, with great earnestness, dissuaded him from his design. They represented the danger he would be in at this juncture in England—pressed him to wait for happier times—and suggested, that it was little less than madness to think of going to a place, from whence all, of his sentiments, were endeavouring to withdraw themselves.

But it is most probable, that his purpose to return at this time was in pursuance of the bishop of Durham's advice ; who, finding the infirmities of age increase upon him, and believing his nephew totally unqualified to advance himself in life, might be desirous of providing for him before his death ; and hoped that his power, in that remote part of the kingdom, would be a sufficient protection for him against his enemies. It is however certain, that he came into England during the heat of the persecution.

SECTION IV.

Upon his arrival in England, he went immediately to the bishop of Durham, who was then in his diocese. Here this humane prelate kept himself withdrawn during most of that violent reign, to avoid having any hand in measures which he abhorred.

When he left London, upon his release from the tower, he was straitly charged with the extirpation of heresy in his diocese : and was given to understand, that severity would be the only allowed test of his zeal.

These instructions he received in the spirit they were given; threatening, that heretics should nowhere find a warmer reception than at Durham; and it was thought indeed the protestants would hardly meet with much favour from him, as they had shewn him so little. But nothing was further from his intention than persecution; insomuch that his was almost the only diocese, where the poor protestants enjoyed any repose. When most of the other bishops sent in large accounts of their services to religion, very lame accounts came from Durham: they were filled with high encomiums of the orthodoxy of the diocese, interspersed here and there with the trial of an heretic; but either the depositions against him were not sufficiently proved; or there were great hopes of his recantation—no mention was made of any burnings. The following story of his lenity we have from Mr. Fox. A person had been accused to him of heresy, whom he had slightly examined, and dismissed. His chancellor thinking him too favourable, pressed for a further examination: the bishop answered, “We have hitherto lived peaceably among our neighbours: let us continue so, and not bring this man’s blood upon us.” A behaviour of this kind was but ill relished by the zealous council; and the bishop lay deservedly under the calumny of being not actuated by true Romish principles.

Such was the state of the diocese of Durham, when Mr. Gilpin came there. The bishop received him with great friendship; and, within a very little time, gave him the archdeaconry of Durham; to which the Rectory of Easington was annexed. It is probable, that if Mr. Gilpin came home by the bishop’s advice, this preferment was then vacant, or soon expected to be so.

Upon removing to his parish, he found it in great disorder. With a firm resolution therefore of doing what good he could in it, he set himself in earnest

to reprove vice publicly and privately ; to encourage virtue ; and to explain the nature of true religion, with a freedom by no means suited to those dangerous times.

Very material objections were then made to the clergy of those parts. The reformation, which advanced but slowly in England, had made least progress in the north. The ecclesiastics there wanted not a popish reign to authorize their superstition. But this was their best side. Their manners were scandalous : the pastoral care was totally neglected ; and it is hard to say, whether vice or ignorance was more remarkable in them.

All over England indeed the church was very ill supplied with ministers. "As for the inferior clergy, (says Fuller,) the best that could be gotten, were placed in pastoral charges. Alas ! tolerability was eminency in that age. A rush candle seemed a torch where no brighter light was ever seen before. Surely preaching now ran very low, if it be true what I read, that Mr. Tavernour, of Water-Eaton in Oxfordshire, high-sheriff of the county, came in pure charity, not ostentation, and gave the scholars a sermon in St. Mary's, with his gold chain about his neck, and his sword by his side."

Nor can we imagine, that the high-sheriff himself contributed much to advance the art of preaching, if we may judge of his oratory by a specimen of it still preserved. "Arriving, (says he), at the mount of St. Mary in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits, baked in the oven of charity, and carefully conserved for the chickens of the church, the sparrows of the spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation."

We may judge likewise of the state of learning at that time among the clergy, from the accounts still preserved of some archidiaconal visitations. "Latine verba aliquot intelligit, non sententiam ; Latine utcunque intelligit ; Latine pauca intelligit ;" were

the expressions generally made use of to characterise them in this particular.

How much, in the north especially, the pastoral care was neglected, we may judge from an account given us of the clergy of those parts, by a bishop of Durham, in a letter still preserved, to an archbishop of Canterbury.

“It is lamentable, (says he), to see how negligently they say any service, and how seldom. Your cures are all, except Rochdale, as far out of order as any of the country. Whalley hath as ill a vicar as the worst. The bishop of Man liveth here at ease, and as merry as pope Joan. The bishop of Chester hath compounded with my lord of York for his visitation, and gathereth up the money by his servants: but never a word spoken of any visitation or reformation; and that, he saith, he doth out of friendship, because he will not trouble the country, nor put them to charge in calling them together.”

This corruption among his brethren gave Mr. Gilpin great concern. “The insatiable covetousness (to use his own words) joined with the pride, carnal liberty, and other vices, which reign at this time in all estates, but especially among us priests, who ought to be the salt of the earth, breaks me many a sleep.” He determined therefore to do all in his power to effect a reformation; or, if that were impossible, to protest however against what he could not alter. He considered, that one of his offices obliged him to take the same care of the manners of the clergy, as the other did of those of the laity; and as he never received an office without a design of doing his duty in it, he resolved to behave as an archdeacon ought.

Accordingly he took every opportunity of reproofing the enormities he remarked. The more ingenuous of the inferior clergy he endeavoured to bring by gentler methods to their duty: the obstinate he would rebuke with all authority. And as he feared

no man in the cause of religion, no man's family or fortune could exempt him from his notice. At visitations particularly, and wherever his audience was chiefly clerical, he would express himself against every thing he observed amiss, with a zeal, which might have been thought affected in one of a less approved sincerity.

It was an opinion of his, that non-residence and pluralities were the principal sources of corruption among churchmen. We need not wonder therefore, if we find him inveighing against them with the greatest earnestness. It must be owned indeed, they were at that time shamefully in use. It was no uncommon thing for a clergyman in those days to hold three, and sometimes four livings together. Mr. Strype mentions one person who held five. His name was Blage: he was a batchelor in divinity; and held at one time, St. Dunstan's in the West, Whiston and Doncaster in Yorkshire, Rugby in Warwickshire, and Barnet in Middlesex. Such enormities went to the heart of the pious archdeacon; and were the constant subjects of his reproof. Sometimes he would shew how wrong they were in themselves, as absolutely contrary to the design of endowments, at other times how injurious to the rest of the order: "While three parts out of four of the clergy, in his manner of speaking, were picking what they could get off a common, the rest were growing wanton with stall-feeding." But his great argument against them was, the prejudice they did religion. "It was reasonable, (he said,) to think a parish would be better taken care of by the priest, who received the whole income; than by the curate, who received only a very small part; and would it might easily be imagined, too often proportion his pains to his allowance." Besides, he thought, one man's engrossing, what in all reason belonged to two, perhaps three or four, agreed very ill with the simple manners, and sequestered life of a minister.

of Christ ; and gave an example which tended more to the discredit of religion, than all the preaching in the world to its advancement.

With equal freedom he likewise censured their private vices : frequently drawing the character of a bad clergyman, and dwelling upon such irregularities as he knew gave most offence in the ecclesiastics of those parts.

The prudent bishop, observing the forwardness of his zeal, failed not to furnish him with cautions in abundance ; often reminding him how prudently he ought to behave, where, with all his prudence, he should scarce avoid giving offence—and his enemies, he said, could never want a handle against him, while popery reigned with so much severity.

But such representations of danger had no effect upon him. The common maxims indeed of worldly prudence, he knew, were against him ; but the examples he found in Scripture of holy men, who with equal freedom opposed vice, and in times as dangerous, wrought strongly with him. If his endeavours were at all serviceable to religion, if they only set some bounds to vice, he thought it criminal to check them through any motives of fear. It was his opinion, that when an employment was accepted, it should be accepted in all its parts : he thought nothing was a greater breach of trust, or more destructive of common good, than to consider public offices only as private emoluments.

It is however a little surprizing, that the bishop of Durham, who knew the world so well, should not foresee how much he must necessarily expose his nephew to the popish party, by placing him in such a station. He knew he could not temporize ; and he must know, that without temporizing, he would soon be obnoxious to those in power ; with whose persecuting principles he was well acquainted. Had he provided for him in a way, which had no connexion with the clergy, it is probable he might

have avoided those dangers in which we shall immediately find him. For his free reproofs soon roused the ecclesiastics of those parts against him, and put them upon every method in their power to remove so inconvenient an enquirer. It was presently the popular clamour, "That he was an enemy to the church—a scandalizer of the clergy—a preacher of damnable doctrines—and that religion must suffer from the heresies he was daily broaching, if they spared him any longer." "After I entered upon the parsonage of Easington, (says he, in a letter to his brother,) and began to preach, I soon procured me many mighty and grievous adversaries, for that I preached against pluralities and non-residence. Some said, all that preached that doctrine became heretics soon after.—Others found great fault, for that I preached repentance and salvation by Christ; and did not make whole sermons, as they did, about transubstantiation, purgatory, holy-water, images, prayers to saints, and such like."

Thus, in short, he had raised a flame, which nothing but his blood could quench. Many articles were drawn up against him, and he was accused in form before the bishop of Durham.

This prosecution was managed chiefly by one Dunstal, a priest in those parts, who had always distinguished himself as the archdeacon's enemy: and as it was imagined the bishop's very great regard for Mr. Gilpin might probably obstruct their designs, this person had been long employed by the party to work underhand, and prejudice the bishop against him.

Happy was it for him, that the prelate had as much discernment as humanity. He knew what men and times would bear; and easily found a method to protect his friend without endangering himself.

When the cause came before him, "He was sorry to hear, that a person he had so great a regard for should be accused of heresy—that indeed himself

had not been without some suspicion of his leaning a little that way—but he had still been in hopes there was nothing in his opinions of any dangerous consequence to religion.—He should however be fairly examined; and if he appeared to be guilty, he should find a very severe judge in the bishop of Durham.

By this management the bishop got the affair into his own hands: and taking care to press his accused friend in points only, in which he knew him able to bear examination, he brought him off innocent; telling the accusers, “He was afraid they had been too forward in their zeal for religion—and that heresy was such a crime, as no man ought to be charged with but on the strongest proof.”

The malice of his enemies could not however rest. His character at least was in their power; for they had great influence upon the populace, of which they failed not to make the worst use, by infusing into those, who were open to hasty impressions, such sentiments as they knew most likely to inflame them. Several of his papers, yet remaining, shew what candid interpreters they were of words and actions, which could possibly be wrested to any bad meaning: one letter particularly, in which with great mildness he endeavours to free himself from the slanders of some of his enemies, who had reported him to have affirmed, “It was as lawful to have two wives as two livings.” He remembered indeed he had once been asked, “Whether of the two was worse?” and that he had carelessly answered, “He thought them both bad:” but to extend this to his affirming, “They were both equally bad,” was perverting his meaning, he thought in a very disingenuous manner.

The great fatigue and constant opposition which Mr. Gilpin thus underwent, were, in the end, he found, too much for him.—He acquainted the bishop, therefore, “That he must resign either his archdeaconry, or his parish,—that he would with the greatest

readiness do his duty in which soever his lordship thought him best qualified for ; but he was not able to do it in both.”—“ Have I not repeatedly told you,” said the bishop, “ that you will die a beggar ? Depend upon it you will, if you suffer your conscience to raise such unreasonable scruples. The archdeaconry and the living cannot be separated : the income of the former is not a support without that of the latter. I found them united, and am determined to leave them so.”

In consequence of the bishop’s refusal to let him keep either of them single, he most probably resigned them both : for we find him about this time without any office in the church.—During his being thus unemployed, he lived with the bishop as one of his chaplains.

But even in this situation he found the malice of his enemies still pursuing him. The defeat they had received did not prevent their seeking every opportunity of attacking him again. He avoided them as much as possible ; and they, on the other hand, contrived to meet him as frequently as they could ; urging him continually upon some controverted point of religion, in contradiction often to the most obvious rules of decency and good manners.

The bishop of Chichester gives us the particulars of one of these disputes ; which, he says, he had often heard his kinsman, Anthony Carleton, speak of, who lived at that time in the bishop of Durham’s family.

Some of the bishop’s chaplains getting about him in their accustomed manner, one of them asked him his opinion of the writings of Luther : Mr. Gilpin answered, “ He had never read them : that his method had always been to study the Scriptures, and the expositions of the fathers upon them ; but for the writings of modern divines, he was not so well acquainted with them.” One of the chaplains, in a sneering manner, commended that as a right way

of proceeding; and added, "That if all men were of Mr. Gilpin's opinion, and had the same veneration for antiquity, the peace of the church would no longer be disturbed with any of these novel teachers." "But suppose," said Mr. Gilpin, "these novel teachers have the sense of antiquity on their side; what shall we say then? Shall the antient doctrine be rejected, because of the novel teacher?" This not satisfying them, they began to urge him farther. "Pray," said one of them, "what are your thoughts about the real presence?" Mr. Gilpin answered, "That he really knew nothing of weight to object against it: but he thought it too mysterious a subject to bear a dispute," "But do you believe transubstantiation?" "I believe every thing contained in the word of God." "But do you believe as the church believes?" "Pray," said Mr. Gilpin, "is the catholic faith unchangeable?" "Undoubtedly it is." "But the church did not always hold transubstantiation as an article of faith." "When did it not hold it so?" "Before the time of Peter Lombard, who first introduced it: and even since his time it hath undergone an alteration. Pray tell me, is not the bread in the sacrament converted into both the body and blood of Christ?" "Undoubtedly it is." "But," said Mr. Gilpin, "Peter Lombard himself did not believe that: for in the eleventh chapter of his fourth book, I very well remember he saith expressly, 'There is no transubstantiation but of bread into flesh, and wine into blood.' And now, I beg you will tell me how you reconcile these things with the unchangeableness of the catholic faith?" The chaplains had nothing to answer: for the words of Lombard indeed plainly denied, that in the transubstantiated bread there was any blood. Mr. Gilpin, observing their confusion, went on: "It appears then that transubstantiation was never heard of in the church, before the time of Peter Lombard: a man might have been a good ca-

tholic without acknowledging that doctrine till then: afterwards, for a long time, the only meaning of it was, a conversion of the bread into flesh, and the wine into blood: and thus it remained, till Thomas Aquinas introduced his notion of concomitancy; at which time this doctrine underwent another change: both flesh and blood were then, it seems, contained really and substantially in the bread alone.—Alas! alas! I am afraid these are the novel opinions that have got in amongst us: the catholic faith, we are both agreed, is unchangeable.” The bishop was sitting before the fire in the same chamber, where this conversation happened; and leaning back in his chair, overheard it. When it was over he got up, and turning to his chaplains, said to them, with some emotion, “Come, come, leave him, leave him, I find he has more learning than all of you put together.”

How long Mr. Gilpin remained unbeneficed, doth not appear. It could not however be very long, because the rectory of Houghton-le-spring fell vacant before Easington, and the archdeaconry, were disposed of; and the bishop, in a jocular way, made him an offer of all the three. But that offer it was not likely he would listen to. He thanked the bishop however, and accepted Houghton.

This rectory was indeed of considerable value, but the duty of it was proportionably laborious. It was so extensive, that it contained no less than fourteen villages: and having been as much neglected in that dark age, as the cures in the north then ordinarily were, popery had produced its full growth of superstition. Scarce any traces, indeed, of true Christianity were left. Nay, what little religion remained, was even popery itself corrupted. All its idle ceremonies were carried higher in the north, than in any other part of the kingdom; and were more considered as the essentials of religion. How entirely this barbarous people were excluded from all means of better information, appears from hence,

that in that part of the kingdom, through the designed neglect of the bishops and justices of the peace, king Edward's proclamations for a change of worship, had not even been heard of at the time of that prince's death.

Such was the condition of the parish of Houghton, when it was committed to Mr. Gilpin's care. He was grieved to see ignorance and vice so lamentably prevail: but he did not despair. He implored the assistance of God; and his sincere endeavours met with it. The people crowded about him, and heard him with attention, perceiving him a teacher of a different kind from those, to whom they had hitherto been accustomed.

Upon his taking possession of Houghton, it was some mortification to him, that he could not immediately reside. His parsonage-house was gone entirely to decay; and some time was required to make it habitable. Part of it was fitted up as soon as possible for his reception: but he continued improving and enlarging it, till it became suitable to his hospitable temper, a proper habitation for a man who never intended to keep what he had to himself. "His house," says the bishop of Chichester, "was like a bishop's palace; superior indeed to most bishops' houses, with respect both to the largeness of the building, and the elegance of the situation."

Soon after this late instance of the bishop's favour to him, another opportunity offered, by which this generous patron hoped still farther to improve his fortune. A stall in the cathedral of Durham was vacant, which he urged Mr. Gilpin in the most friendly manner to accept; telling him, "There lay not the same objection to this as to the archdeaconry—that it was quite a sinecure—and that he could have no reasonable pretence for refusing it." But Mr. Gilpin resolving not to accept it, told the bishop, "That by his bounty he had already more wealth, than, he was afraid, he could give a good account

of. He begged therefore, he might not have an additional charge; but that his lordship would rather bestow this preferment on one by whom it was more wanted." The bishop knew by long experience it was in vain to press him to what he did not approve, so there was no more said of the prebend.

Though he lived now retired, and gave no offence to the clergy, their malice still pursued him. They observed with indignation the strong opposition between his life and theirs. His care and labour were a standing satire upon their negligence and sloth; and it was the language of their hearts, "By so living thou reproachest us." In a word, they were determined, if possible, to remove so disagreeable a contrast.

But they had not the easiest part to manage. The country favoured him; the bishop was his friend; and no good man his enemy. However, what malice could do was not wanting: every engine was set at work; and base emissaries employed in all parts to seek out matter for an accusation of him. Of all this Mr. Gilpin was sensible, and behaved as cautiously as he thought consistent with his duty; indeed more cautiously than he could afterwards approve: for, in his future life, he would often tax his behaviour at this time with weakness and cowardice*.

But had his caution been greater against such vigilant enemies, it had probably been still ineffectual. The eyes of numbers were constantly upon him, and scarce an action of his life escaped them. Of this malicious industry we have the following instance.

A woman in a dangerous labour, imploring God's assistance, was rebuked by those around her for not rather praying to the Virgin Mary. Alarmed by her danger, and greatly desirous of knowing whether God or the Virgin was more likely to assist her, she

* See page 140.

begged. "The great preacher lately come from abroad, might be sent for : she was sure he would come, and could tell her what she should do." Mr. Gilpin told her, "He durst not persuade her to call upon the Virgin Mary ; but in praying to God, she might be sure she did right—that there were many express commands in Scripture for it—and that God would certainly hear them who prayed earnestly to him." Mr. Gilpin was afterwards surprized to find that even this private transaction had not escaped the vigilance of his enemies.

By so unwearied an industry such a number of articles were in a short time got together, as, it was thought, could not fail to crush him. He was formally accused therefore, and brought once more before the bishop of Durham. How the bishop behaved at this time we are not particularly informed. But no man knew better how to act upon an emergency. It is probable he would vary his management ; but it is certain Mr. Gilpin was acquitted.

The malice of his enemies succeeded however in part ; for the bishop's favour to him from this time visibly declined. The bishop was a prudent man ; and when he found that his kinsman's piety (carried, as he thought, in many instances, to excess) began to involve himself in inconveniences and suspicions : it is not unlikely that he might judge his friendship had led him too far from his own prudential maxims of behaviour, and that he might resolve to endanger his quiet no longer for the sake of a man whose obstinacy was insuperable*.

* About Easter I was accused again before the bishop, in many articles, both from York and Durham : but these could take no farther hold against me, than only to make the bishop to blot me out of his testament ; and to make the vulgar people speak evil of me. For losing the disposal of the bishop's goods, I thought I was well unburthened ; and for the people's favour, to the end I might

This was not less than Mr. Gilpin expected. He acknowledged his great obligations to the bishop; was sorry to see him disgusted; and would have given up any thing to have satisfied him, except his conscience.

His enemies, in the mean time, were not thus silenced. Though they had been defeated a second time, they were still determined to proceed. But as they had found the bishop of Durham could not be wrought on as they wished, they resolved to carry their accusation elsewhere. Thirty-two articles were accordingly drawn up against him; and laid before Bonner of London. Here they went the right way to work. Bonner at once took fire; extolled their laudable concern for religion, and promised that the heretic should be at a stake in a fortnight.

Mr. Gilpin's friends in London trembled for his safety, and instantly dispatched a message—that he had not a moment to lose.

The messenger did not surprise him. He had long been preparing himself to suffer for the truth, and he now determined not to decline it. It was in some sort, he thought, denying his faith, to be backward in giving the best testimony to it: and as it was the principal business of his life to promote religion, if he could better effect this by his death, it was his wish to die.

He received the account, therefore, with great composure: and calling up William Airay, a favourite domestic, who had long served him as his steward; and laying his hand upon his shoulder, “At length,” says he, “they have prevailed against me—I am accused to the bishop of London, from whom there will be no escaping—God forgive their malice, and

more edify in preaching (otherwise I did not covet it) I trusted time, through God's goodness, would bring it again. Extract of a letter from Bernard Gilpin to his brother.

grant me strength to undergo the trial." He then ordered his servant to provide a long garment for him, in which he might go decently to the stake; and desired it might be made ready with all expedition; "For I know not," says he, "how soon I may have occasion for it."

As soon as this garment was provided, it is said, he used to put it on every day till the bishop's messengers apprehended him.

His friends in the mean time failed not to interpose; earnestly beseeching him, while he had yet an opportunity, to provide for his safety. But he begged them not to press him longer on that subject: should he even attempt it, he said, he believed it would hardly be in his power to escape; for he questioned not but all his motions were very narrowly observed.— Besides, he would ask, how they could imagine he would prefer the miserable life of an exile, before the joyful death of a martyr? "Be assured," says he, "I should never have thrown myself voluntarily into the hands of my enemies; but I am fully determined to persevere in doing my duty, and shall take no measures to avoid them."

In a few days the messengers apprehended him, and put an end to these solicitations.

In his way to London, it is said, he broke his leg, which put a stop for some time to his journey. The persons, in whose custody he was, took occasion thence, maliciously to retort upon him an observation he would frequently make, "That nothing happens to us but what is intended for our good;" asking him, "Whether he thought his broken leg was so intended?" He answered meekly, "He made no question but it was." And indeed so it proved in the strictest sense: for before he was able to travel, queen Mary died, and he was set at liberty.

Whatever truth there may be in this relation, which depends only on a tradition of the family; thus

much is certain: the account of the queen's death met him upon the road, and put a stop to any farther prosecution.

SECTION V.

Mr. Gilpin thus providentially rescued from his enemies, returned to Houghton through crouds of people, expressing the utmost joy, and blessing God for his deliverance.

Elizabeth's accession freed him now from all restraint, and allowed him the liberty he had long wished for, of speaking his mind plainly to his parishioners: though nobody but himself thought the reserve he had hitherto used at all faulty.

It was now his friend the bishop of Durham's turn to suffer. He and some other bishops refusing the oath of supremacy, were deprived and committed to the tower. But this severity soon relaxed: to the bishop of Durham especially, the government shewed as much lenity as was thought consistent with the reformation then carrying on. He was recommended to the care of the archbishop of Canterbury; with whom he spent in great tranquillity the short remainder of a very long life.

This prelate had seen as great a variety of fortune as most men; he had lived in difficult and in easy times; he had known both protestants and papists in power; and yet from all parties, and in all revolutions of government, he had found favour. The truth is, he was well versed in the art of temporizing, and possessed a large share of that complying philosophy, which taking offence at nothing, can adapt itself to all things. When Henry the eighth began to innovate, the bishop of Durham had no scruples. When his son went farther, still the bishop was quiet, and owed indeed his confinement at the close of that reign to his desire of continuing

so. Again, when queen Mary reversed what they had done, with this too the bishop was satisfied, and forgot all his former professions. Thus much however may justly be said of him, that upon all occasions, and where no secular ends were in view, he shewed himself a man of great moderation: and whether in his heart he was more papist or protestant, to arbitrary proceedings however in either persuasion he was wholly averse. Thus he thought things were carried too far on one side in king Edward's time, and too far on the other in queen Mary's: with both reigns he was dissatisfied, though he was too great a lover of his ease to oppose them. But as his days shortened, his conscience grew more tender, and what he had done for king Henry and king Edward, he refused to do again for queen Elizabeth. Though the bishop of Salisbury is of opinion, he was not withheld by any scruples, but such as a sense of decency raised, from complying with that princess; he was very old, and thought it looked better to undergo the same fate with his brethren, than to be still changing*. And this is the rather probable, because many historians say, the late reign had given him a great disgust to popery; and that he would often own to archbishop Parker, he began to think every day more favourably of the reformers. —In private life his manners were very commendable. He had an absolute command over himself; a temper which no accident could discompose; great humanity, and great good nature. In learning, few of his contemporaries were equal to him; none more ready to patronize it. Of the offices of friendship, he was a strict observer; and was not only a favourer, but a zealous encourager of good men. In a word, where he was not immediately under the influence of court-maxims, he gave the example of a true Christian bishop.

* See Burnet's History of the Reformation.

Mr. Gilpin, though deprived of the assistance of this great prelate, soon experienced however, that worth like his could never be left friendless. His merit raised him friends wherever he was known; and though his piety was such, that he never proposed reputation as the ead of his actions; yet perhaps few of his profession stood at this time higher in the public esteem. "He was respected," says the bishop of Chichester, "not only by the more eminent churchmen, but by those of the first rank in the nation."

When the popish bishops were deprived, and many sees became vacant, Mr. Gilpin's friends at court, particularly the earl of Bedford, thought it a good opportunity to use their interest in his favour. He was recommended accordingly to the queen, as a proper person for one of the void bishoprics: on which, as he was a north-countryman, she nominated him to that of Carlisle; and the earl took immediate care that a congé d'elire, with her majesty's recommendation of him, should be sent down to the dean and chapter of that see.

Mr. Gilpin, who knew nothing of what was going forward in his favour, was greatly surprised at this unexpected honour; yet could not by any means persuade himself to accept it. He sent a messenger therefore with a letter to to the earl, expressing his great obligations to her majesty and his lordship for their favourable sentiments of him—but begged they would excuse his accepting their intended kindness—they had really thought of placing him in a station which he did not merit—he must therefore remove from himself a burden to which he, who was best acquainted with his own weakness, knew himself unequal—in the mean time he would not fail to do his utmost for the service of religion in an inferior employment.

The earl, upon the receipt of this letter, went immediately to Dr. Sandys, bishop of Worcester,

who was then in London. As this prelate was intimately acquainted with Mr. Gilpin, and, as the bishop of Chichester says, nearly related to him, the earl supposed he could not be without his influence over him; and therefore earnestly desired he would endeavour to persuade his friend to think less meanly of himself. The bishop readily undertook the office, and wrote the following letter to Mr. Gilpin*.

“ My much respected kinsman, regarding not so much your private interest, as the interest of religion, I did what I could, that the bishopric of Carlisle, might be secured to you : and the just character I gave of you to the queen has, I doubt not, had some weight with her majesty in her promotion of you to that see; which not to mention the honour of it, will enable you to be of the utmost service to the church of Christ.—I am not ignorant how much rather you chuse a private station : but if you consider the condition of the church at this time, you cannot, I think, with a good conscience, refuse this burden ; especially as it is in a part of the kingdom, where no man is thought fitter than yourself to be of service to religion. Wherefore I charge you before God, and as you will answer to him, that laying all excuses aside, you refuse not to assist your country, and do what service you can to the church of God.—In the mean time, I can inform you, that by the queen’s favour you will have the bishopric just in the condition in which Dr. Oglethorpe left it ; nothing shall be taken from it, as hath been from some others. Wherefore exhorting and beseeching you to be obedient to God’s call herein, and not to neglect the duty of your function, I commend both you and this whole business to the divine providence. Your kinsman and brother, “ EDWIN WORCESTER.”

London, April 4, 1560.

* The original is lost, but the bishop of Chichester has preserved a latin translation of it, from which this is taken.

This letter, notwithstanding the pressing manner in which it is written, was without effect. Mr. Gilpin returned his thanks; but as for the bishopric, he was determined, and he thought for very good reasons, not to accept it. Nor could all the persuasions of his friends alter this resolution. Had he, they asked him, any scruple of conscience about it?—In one sense he had: “The case,” says he, “is truly this: if any other bishopric, besides Carlisle, had been offered to me, I possibly might have accepted it: but in that diocese I have so many friends and acquaintance, of whom I have not the best opinion, that I must either connive at many irregularities, or draw upon myself so much hatred, that I should be less able to do good there than any one else.”

Mr. Gilpin thus persisting in his refusal, the bishopric was at length given to Dr. Best, a man by no means undeserving of it.

This prelate soon found he had entered upon a very disagreeable and vexatious office. His cathedral was filled with an illiterate set of men, who had been formerly monks: “For,” as Camden tells us, “the greater part of the popish priests thought it would turn to better account to renounce the pope’s authority, and swear allegiance to the queen, were it for no other end than the exclusion of protestants out of their churches, and the relief of such of their own party, who had been displaced. This they judged a piece of discretion highly meritorious, and hoped the pope would be so good as dispense with their oath on such an occasion.” The diocese of Carlisle was much in this situation; and indeed the people there were as strongly inclined to the superstitions of popery as the priests. This disposition of the country, whetted by the prelate’s rigid opposition, who was not a man the most happily qualified to manage unruly tempers, began to shew itself in very violent effects. The whole diocese was soon

in a flame; and the bishop, after two years' residence, was obliged to repair to London, and make a formal complaint to his superiors.

This vexation which the popish party was likely to give to any one placed in the see of Carlisle, is imagined, by the archbishop Grindal's life, to be a principal reason why Mr. Gilpin refused it. But this would have been as good a reason for his refusing the rectory of Houghton, or any other employment in the church: for popery prevailed universally over the country; and he could be placed no where in the north without experiencing a toilsome opposition to the bigotry and prejudices of it. But his own ease and convenience were never motives of the least weight with him, when any service to mankind could be balanced against them.

The accounts given us by bishop Nicholson and Dr. Heylin of Mr. Gilpin's behaviour on this occasion are still more disingenuous: they both ascribe it chiefly to lucrative motives. The * former intimates, that the good man knew what he was about, when he refused to part with the rectory of Houghton for the bishopric of Carlisle: the † latter supposes that all his scruples would have vanished, might he have had the old temporalities undiminished. Both these writers seem to have been very little acquainted with Mr. Gilpin's character, in which disinterestedness bore so principal a part: it will hereafter appear, that he considered his income in no other light than that of a fund to be managed for the common good. The bishop's insinuation therefore is contradicted by every action of Mr. Gilpin's life: and as for Dr. Heylin's, it is most notoriously false; for the bishopric was offered to him with the old temporalities undiminished ‡.

There were not wanting some who attributed his

* In his historical library. † In his church history.

‡ See the bishop of Worcester's letter, p. 177.

refusal of the bishopric to unfavourable sentiments of episcopacy. But neither for this was there any good foundation. He was indeed far from being a bigot to that or any other form of church government, esteeming a good life, which might be led under any of them, the best evidence of a Christian. Yet he seems to have thought most favourably of the episcopal form ; as will appear afterwards, when notice is taken of the endeavours of the dissenters to draw him to their party.

The year after his refusal of the bishopric of Carlisle, an offer of another kind was made him.

The provostship of Queen's-college in Oxford becoming vacant soon after Elizabeth's accession ; and the fellows who were strongly attached to popery, being about to chuse a person inclined the same way, the queen, with their visitor the archbishop of York, interposed, and insisted on their electing Dr. Francis. The fellows were much out of humour at this proceeding ; and the affair made some noise in the university, where the popish party was very strong. At length however the queen's recommendation took effect. But though the fellows had thus chosen the person recommended to them, yet their behaviour was so undutiful towards him, that he was soon weary of his office ; and in less than a year began to think of resigning it. Mr. Gilpin was the person he turned his thoughts on for a successor, apprehending that such a change would not be unpleasant to the fellows, and very agreeable to the queen. He made him an offer therefore of resigning in his favour : but not succeeding the first time, he wrote again ; begging at least that he would recommend to him some proper person, and assuring him with what readiness he would acquiesce in his choice. His second letter is still preserved.

“ After my hearty commendations : meaning to leave the place which I occupy in the Queen's-college at Oxford, and being desirous to prefer some honest,

learned, godly, and eligible person to that office, I thought good yet once again to offer the provostship thereof unto you : which if it please you to accept, I shall be glad upon the sight of your letters, written to that end, to move the fellows, whom I know do mean you marvellously well. But, and if you propose not to encumber yourself with so small a portion in unquietness (so may I justly call it) I shall wait your advice upon whom I may confer the same, whom you think mete and eligible thereunto : and I shall be ready to follow your advice upon the receiving of your letters, wherewith I pray you speedily to certify me.

“ By yours to command,

“ THOMAS FRANCIS.”

Oxford, December 17, 1561.

How Mr. Gilpin answered this letter doth not appear ; nor whether he recommended a successor to the dissatisfied provost : this only is certain, that he refused the offer himself.

Thus having had in his option almost every kind of preferment which an ecclesiastic is capable of holding, he sat down with one living, which gratified the utmost of his desires—for he found it afforded him as many opportunities of doing good, as he was able to make use of.

Soon after Elizabeth's accession, a general visitation was held. An assembly of divines, among whom were Parker, Grindal, and Sandys, having finished a body of injunctions and articles, commissions were issued out, empowering proper persons to enforce them ; the oath of supremacy was to be tendered to the clergy, and a subscription imposed. When the visitors came to Durham, Mr. Gilpin was sent to, and requested to preach before the clergy there, against the pope's supremacy. To this he had no objection : but he did not like the thoughts of subscribing, having some doubts with regard to one or

more of the articles. His curate having not these scruples, he hoped that his subscription might satisfy the visitors. But he was mistaken; for the next day, when the clergy were assembled to subscribe, as an instance of respect, Mr. Gilpin was first called upon. The emergency allowed him no time for reflection. He just considered with himself, that upon the whole, these alterations in religion were certainly right—that he doubted only in a few immaterial points—and that if he should refuse, it might keep others back. He then took up the pen, and, with some hesitation, at length subscribed. Afterwards retiring, he sent a letter to the visitors, acquainting them in what sense he subscribed the articles; which they accepted very favourably.

The great ignorance which at this time prevailed over the nation, afforded a melancholy prospect to all who had the interest of religion at heart. To it was owing that gross superstition which kept reformation every where so long at a stand; a superstition which was like to continue; for all the channels, through which knowledge could flow, were choaked up. There were few schools in the nation; and these as ill supplied as they were endowed. The universities were in the hands of bigots, collecting their strength to defend absurdities to the utter neglect of all good learning. At Cambridge indeed some advances in useful literature were made; Sir John Cheke, Roger Ascham*, and a few others,

* Sir John Cheke was fellow of St. John's, and afterwards tutor to Edward the Sixth. In queen Mary's time he fled into Germany; but by a trick was brought home, and recanted to save his life; "A great example (says Lloyd in his state worthies) of parts and ingenuity, of frailty and infirmity, of repentance and piety." Roger Ascham was fellow of the same college; and professor of oratory in the university; afterwards tutor and secretary to queen Elizabeth. He was a man of great learning, honesty, and indiscretion.

having boldly struck out a new path through that wilderness of false science, which involved them: but they were yet lazily followed.

The very bad consequences which could not but be feared from this extreme ignorance, turned the endeavours of all well-wishers to the progress of true religion upon the most probable methods to remove it. The queen herself was greatly interested in this matter, and earnestly recommended it to the care of her council; who began to vie with each other in their endeavours to root out false science, as they had already done false religion.

No good work ever went forward; which Mr. Gilpin did not promote, as far as he was able. In this he joined to the utmost of his abilities—as was commonly indeed thought, beyond them. His manner of living was the most affluent, and generous: his hospitality made daily a large demand upon him; and his bounty and charities a much larger. His acquaintance therefore could not but wonder to find him, amidst such great expences, entertaining the design of building and endowing a grammar-school: a design however which his exact economy enabled him to accomplish.

The effects of his endowment were very quickly seen. His school was no sooner opened than it began to flourish, and afford the agreeable prospect of a succeeding generation rising above the ignorance and errors of their forefathers.

That such might be its effects, no care on his part was wanting. He not only placed able masters in his school, whom he procured from Oxford, but himself likewise constantly inspected it. And that encouragement might quicken the application of his boys, he took particular notice of the most forward: he would call them his own scholars, and would send for them into his study, and there instruct them himself.—Often when he met a poor boy upon the road, he would make trial of his capacity by a few ques-

tions; and if he found it such as pleased him, he would provide for his education.

Nor did his care end here. From school he sent several to the universities, where he maintained them at his own expence. To others, who were in circumstances to do something for themselves, he would give the farther assistance they needed; and thus induced many parents to allow their children a liberal education, who were otherwise unequal, or perhaps disinclined, to it. While the church was in possession of its immense wealth, the universities were always full: but when this was taken away, it soon appeared that the muses, unportioned, had very few charms. In king Edward's reign, bishop Latimer calculated, that even in that short space of time since the alienation of the church-lands, the two universities were diminished by above ten thousand persons; a number almost incredible.

Nor did Mr. Gilpin think it enough to afford the means only of an academical education to these young people, but endeavoured with the utmost care to make it as beneficial to them as he could. He still considered himself as their proper guardian; and seemed to think himself bound to the public for their being made useful members of it, as far as it lay in his power to make them so. With this view he held a punctual correspondence with their tutors; and made the youths themselves likewise frequently write to him, and give him an account of their studies. Several of their letters, chiefly preserved by having something of Mr. Gilpin's written upon their backs, still remain, and shew in how great veneration he was held among them*. So solicitous indeed was

* An extract from one of these letters is worth preserving. It contains a curious account of that remarkable sickness in Oxford, which succeeded the black assize, as it was afterwards called. The original is in latin.

“ The terrible distemper among us, of which you have

he about them, knowing the many temptations to which their age and situation exposed them, that once every other year, he generally made a journey to the universities, to inspect their behaviour.

Nor was this uncommon care unrewarded. Few of his scholars miscarried: "Many of them," says the bishop of Chichester, "became great ornaments to the church; and very exemplary instances of piety."

Among those of any note, who were educated by him, I find these three particularly mentioned; Henry Ayray, George Carleton, and Hugh Broughton.

undoubtedly heard, hath made it indeed a dreadful time to us. During the first six days there died ninety-five; seventy of whom were scholars. This is not conjecture, but appears from the mayor's list. The infection does not confine itself to the town, but begins to spread in the country; where, if our accounts are true, it hath carried off numbers of people: amongst them poor Mr. Roberts. Those who are seized with it, are in the utmost torment: their bowels are burnt up: they call earnestly for drink: they cannot bear the touch of clothes: they intreat the standers by to throw cold water upon them: sometimes they are quite mad; rise upon their keepers; run naked out of houses; and often endeavour to put an end to their lives.—The physicians are confounded, declaring they have met with nothing similar either in their reading or practice. Yet many of them give this distemper a name, though they have done nothing to shew they are at all acquainted with its nature. The greater part of them, I am told, have now left the town, either out of fear for themselves, or conscious that they can do no good.—This dreadful distemper is now generally attributed to some jail infection, brought into court at the assizes: for it is remarkable, that the first infected were those only who had been there.—Few women or old men have died.—God be thanked, the rage of this pestilence is now much abated. It is still among us in some degree, but its effects appear every day weaker."

Henry Ayray became afterwards provost of Queen's-college in Oxford; where he was in great esteem for his abilities, and exemplary life.

George Carleton was a man of worth and learning, and very deservedly promoted to the see of Chichester. It might have been added, that he was much caressed and employed by James I. but the favours of that undistinguished monarch reflected no great honour upon the objects of them. To this good prelate the world is chiefly indebted for these memorials of Mr. Gilpin's life.

Hugh Broughton, was indeed famous in his time, and as a man of letters esteemed by many, but in every other light despicable. He was a remarkable instance of the danger of learning without common sense. During the younger part of his life he confined himself to a college library, where his trifling genius engaged him chiefly in rabbinical learning, in which he made a notable progress. Thus accomplished, he came abroad, with an opinion of himself equalled only by his sovereign contempt for others. As he wanted that modest diffidence which is the natural guard of a person unacquainted with the world, he soon involved himself in difficulties. London was the scene where he first exposed himself. Here for some time he paid a servile court to the vulgar, in the capacity of a popular preacher: but afterwards giving a freer scope to his vanity, he set up a conventicle; where assuming the air of an original, he treated the opinions of the times, and all who maintained them, with an insufferable insolence and scurrility. Disappointed of his expected preferment, and thoroughly mortified that his merit had been so long disregarded, he withdrew into Germany. Thither he carried his old temper, attacking Jews in synagogues, and papists in mass-houses. But he was soon glad to return into England; where having lived out all his credit, and become the

jest even of the stage*, he died—a standing monument of the folly of applying learning to the purposes of vanity, rather than the moral ends of life†.

* See the *Alchymist* of Ben Jonson; act 2. sc. 3. and act 4. sc. 5.—The *Fox*; act 2. sc. 2.

† The following elegy upon Mr. Broughton's death, written in the year 1612, I met with accidentally. The reader will not be displeased with it, as it is a very beautiful composition, and serves likewise to illustrate Mr. Broughton's character; for though meant as an encomium, it is rather a satire upon him for employing himself in matters of mere curiosity, in the most trifling studies, which belonged to his profession.

A comely dame in sorrow's garments drest,
Where chrystal-sliding Thames doth gently creep,
With her soft palm did beat her ivory breast,
And rent her yellow locks; her rosy cheek
She in a flood of briny tears did steep:
Rachel she seemed, old Israel's beauteous wife,
Mourning her sons, whose silver cord of life
Was cut by murd'rous Herod's fell and bloody knife.

Between her lily hands the virgin held
Two testaments; the one defaced with rust,
Vanquisht with time, and overgrown with eld,
All stained with careless spots, all soiled with dust;
It seemed the same the which Jehovah earst
With his celestial finger did engrave,
And on the top of smoaking Sinai gave
To him, whom Pharoah's daughter found in watery cave.

The other seemed fresh, and fairly clad
In velvet cover, filleted with gold;
White bullions and crimson ties it had:
Its pumic'd leaves were seemly to behold:
That spotless Lamb, which trait'rous Judas sold,
With sacred stain, fresh issuing from his side,
Them gilt, when in Jerusalem he dyed,
For to redeem his dearest love, his beauteous bride.

But to return: while Mr. Gilpin was engaged in settling his school, he was for some time interrupted

Theology, for so men called the maid,
Upon these volumes cast her melting eyes:
“And who shall now,” quoth she, “since Broughton’s
dead,

Find out the treasure, which within you lies,
Shadowed in high and heavenly mysteries?
Ah! who shall now,” quoth she, “to others tell
How earth’s great ancestor, old Adam fell,
Banished from flowery Eden, where he once did dwell?

“What meant that monstrous man, whom Babel’s king
Did in a troubled slumber once behold,
Like huge Goliath, slain by David’s sling,
Whose dreadful head, and curled locks were gold,
With breasts and mighty arms of silver mould;
Whose swelling belly and large sides were brass,
Whose legs were iron, feet of mingled mass,
Of which one part was clay, the other iron was!

“What meant the lion, plumed in eagle’s wings:
What meant the bear, that in his horrid jaw
Three ribs of some devoured carcase brings:
What meant the leopard, which Belshazzar saw,
With dreadful mouth and with a murdering paw;
And what that all-devouring horned beast
With iron teeth, and with his horrid crest,
All this, and much besides, by Broughton was exprest.

“’Twas he that branched Messiah’s sacred stem
In curious knots, and traced his earthly race
From princely Adam to the noble Sem,
So down to him that held Coniah’s place,
And from his son to Mary full of grace,
A heavenly maid, a blessed virgin wife,
Who highly favoured, gave the precious life,
The ransom of a world from sin and Satan’s strife.

“’Twas he that graved the names of Jacob’s sons
In that mysterious plate on Aaron’s breast:

by a rebellion which broke out in the north. The popish party, which had given so much disturbance

Reuben in sardius, which as water runs ;
In topaz Simeon, baser than the rest ;
In emerald Levi, for his doctrine best ;
Judah in carbuncle, like heaven's bright eye
And Issachar in sapphire's azure die ;
In ruby Zabulon, which near the sea doth lie ;

“ Dan in the flowery hyacinth is cut ;
In agate Napthali ; and warlike Gad
In bloody amethyst : Ashur is put
In crysolite : the beryl Joseph had ;
Young Benjamin, old Jacob's sweetest lad,
The onyx : each within his several stone
Our great Bezaleol carved, who now is gone
To praise the Lamb, and him who sits upon the throne.

“ Ye sacred Muses, that on Siloah sing,
And in celestial dew do dip your quill,
The which your Phœbus, mighty Elohim,
In silver-streaming channels doth distill
From top of Hermon, and of Sion hill,
As you your great Creator's praise rehearse,
Ah ! lend one broken sigh, one broken verse,
One doleful-tuned hymn to deck his sable hearse.

“ And you, poor Jews, the issue of old Sem,
Who did in honey flowing Canaan dwell,
And swayed the sceptre of Jerusalem,
Until some snaky fury, sent from hell,
Did you enrage with spite and malice fell
To put your Lord to death—ah ! now repent
For murdering that Lord—ah ! now lament
His death, who would have brought you into Japhet's tent.

“ Ye learned clerks, that covet Adam's tongue,
Long time preserv'd in Heber's holy line,
After th' emprise of that heav'n-scaling throng,
Which sought above the dew-steep'd clouds to climb

to Elizabeth's reign, made at this time a fresh effort. Two factious spirits, the earls of Westmoreland, and Northumberland, inflamed by the seditious whispers of a Romish emissary, were drawn from their allegiance. The watchful ministry soon suspected them; and the queen, with her usual foresight, appointed a short day for their appearance at court, obliged them, yet unprepared, to take arms.

(Such hateful pride was found in earthly slime)
Do you lament this wondrous learned man,
Who, tuneful as the silver-pinion'd swan,
Canaan's rich language in perfection sang.

“ He knew the Greek, plenteous in words and sense,
The Chaldee wise, the Arabic profound,
The Latin pleasing with its eloquence,
The braving Spanish with its lofty sound,
The Tuscan grave with many a laurel crown'd,
The lisping French that fits a lady vain,
The German, like the people, rough and plain,
The English full and rich, his native country's strain.

“ Ah! Scottish Ishmaels, do not offer wrong
Unto his quiet urn; do not defame
The silver sound of that harmonious tongue:
Peace, dirty mouths, be quieted by shame,
Nor vent your gall upon a dead man's name.
O wake, ye west-winds; come, ye south, and blow;
With your myrth-breathing mouths sweet odours throw
Into the scented air round Broughton's tomb below.”

This said, the virgin vanished away,
Meanwhile heaven put its darkest mantle on;
The moon obscured withheld her silver ray;
No twinkling star with cheerful lustre shone,
But sable night lowered from her ebon throne.
—Yet sorrow cease; tho' he's no longer ours,
Still, still he lives in yon celestial bowers,
And reigns triumphant with a choir of heavenly powers.

Mr. Gilpin had observed the fire gathering before the flame burst out; and knowing what zealots would soon approach him, he thought it prudent to withdraw. Having given proper advice therefore to his masters and scholars, he took the opportunity to make a journey to Oxford.

The rebels in the mean time published their manifesto, and appeared in arms; displaying in their banners a chalice, and the five wounds of Christ, and enthusiastically brandishing a cross before them. In this order they marched to Bernard-castle, which surrendered to them. They next surprized Durham; where they burned all the bibles they could find, and had mass said publicly in the cathedral. The country around felt their rage. Many of them ravaged as far as Houghton. Here they found much booty: the harvest was just over; the barns were full; the grounds well stocked with fatted cattle. Every thing became their prey; and what was designed to spread a winter's gladness through a country, was in a moment wasted by these ravagers.

But themselves soon felt the consternation they occasioned. The approach of the earl of Sussex with a numerous army was now confirmed. Every rumour brought him nearer. Their fears proportionally increased, they mutinied, threw down their arms, and dispersed. The country being generally loyal, many were taken, and imprisoned at Durham and Newcastle; where Sir George Bowes was commissioned to try them.

Here Mr. Gilpin had an opportunity of shewing his humanity. Sir George had received personal ill treatment from them; and the clamours of a plundered country demanded the utmost legal severity: and indeed the utmost legal severity was exercised, to the great indignation of all, who were not wholly bent on revenge. This induced Mr. Gilpin to interpose. He represented to the marshal the true state of the country, "That, in general, the people were well

affected ; but being extremely ignorant, many of them had been seduced by idle stories, which the rebels had propagated, making them believe they took up arms for the queen's service." Persuaded by what he said, or paying a deference to his character, the marshal grew more mild ; and shewed instances of mercy, not expected from him.

About this time Mr. Gilpin lost one of the most intimate friends he ever had, Dr. Pilkington, bishop of Durham ; a man much admired for his learning, but more esteemed for the integrity of his life. He was bred at Cambridge, where he was many years master of St. John's college. Here he was first taken notice of for a freedom of speech which drew upon him queen Mary's resentment. But he had the good fortune to escape the inquisition of those times. In the succeeding reign he recommended himself by an exposition of the book of Haggai, or rather by an ingenious application of it to the reformation in religion then designing. He was afterwards introduced to the queen ; and being found a man of true moderation, the reformed temper then looked for, and of abilities not unequal to the charge, he was promoted to the see of Durham. Having taken upon him this trust, he made it the endeavour of his life to fulfil it. He withdrew himself immediately from all state avocations, and court dependencies, in which indeed he had never been much involved, and applied himself wholly to the duties of his function ; promoting religion rather by his own example, than by the use of proper discipline, in which he was thought too remiss.—At Durham he became acquainted with Mr. Gilpin. Their minds, intent on the same pursuits, easily blended. It was a pure friendship, in which interest had no share ; for the one had nothing to ask, the other had nothing to receive. When business did not require their being separate, they were generally together ; sometimes at Bishop-Awkland, and as often at Houghton. At

these meetings they consulted many pious designs. Induced by Mr. Gilpin's example, the bishop founded a school at the place of his nativity in Lancashire; the statutes of which he brought to his friend to revise and correct.

SECTION VI.

Mr. Gilpin's blameless life, his reputation in the world, his piety, his learning, and that uncommon regard for truth, which he had always discovered, made it the desire of persons of all religious persuasions to get him of their party, and have their cause credited by his authority.

The dissenters made early proposals to him. The reformation had scarce obtained a legal settlement under Elizabeth, when that party appeared. Its origin was this.

The English protestants, whom the Marian persecution had driven from home, flying in great bodies into Germany and Switzerland, settled at Frankfort, Strasburgh, Arrow, Zuric, and Geneva. Of all these places Frankfort afforded them the kindest reception. Here, by the favour of the magistracy, they obtained the joint use of a church with the distressed protestants of France, to whom likewise Frankfort at that time afforded protection. These were chiefly Calvinists. Religious prejudices between both parties were however here laid aside. Their circumstances as fellow-exiles in a foreign land, and fellow-sufferers in a common cause, inspired them with mutual tenderness: in one great opposition all others subsided; and protestant and papist became the only distinction. In a word, the English thinking their own church now dissolved, having no material objections, and being the less body, for the sake of peace and convenience, receded from their liturgy, and conformed to the French.

Some authors indeed mention this as an imposed condition. Be it however as it will, the coalition was no sooner known, than it gave the highest offence to many of the English settled in other parts. "It was scandalous," they exclaimed, "to shew so little regard to an establishment which was formed with so much wisdom, was so well calculated for all the ends of religion, and for which their poor brethren in England were at that time laying down their lives." The truth of the case was, the argument had been before moved; and this was only the rekindling of that flame which John a Lasco had formerly raised*. An opposition so very unseasonable produced, as such oppositions generally do, the worst effects. Besides the scandal it every where gave, it engaged the Frankfort English in a formal defence of their proceedings; and their passions being excited, they began at length to maintain on principle, what they at first espoused only for convenience. Accordingly, when they came home, they revived the dispute with bitterness enough; and became then as unreasonable in molesting, as they had before been unreasonably molested. Subtle men will never be wanting, who have their sinister ends to serve by party-quarrels. And thus some ambitious spirits among the dissenters, wanting to make themselves considerable, blew up the flame with great vehemence: "It was as good," they exclaimed, "not to begin a reformation, as not to go through with it—the church of England was not half reformed—its doctrines indeed were tolerable, but its ceremonies and government were popish and unchristian

* John a Lasco was a native of Poland; from whence being driven on the account of his religion, he retired into England; where, by the favour of Edward the Sixth, he was allowed to open a church for the use of those of his own persuasion. But he made only a bad use of this indulgence; interfering very impertinently in the ecclesiastical controversies then on foot.

—it was in vain to boast of having thrown off the Romish yoke abroad, while the nation groaned under a lordly hierarchy at home—and for themselves, as they had been sufferers in the cause of religion, they thought it was but right they should be consulted about the settlement of it.” This imprudent language was a melancholy presage to all who had real Christianity at heart. It was answered, “That things were now legally settled—that whatever could give just offence to the scrupulous had been, it was thought, removed—that if they could not conform, a quiet non-conformity would be tolerated—and that the many inconveniences attending even that change, which was absolutely necessary, made it very disagreeable to think of another, which was not so.” The lord Burleigh endeavoured to convince them how impossible it was in things of this nature to give universal satisfaction, by shewing them that even among themselves they could not agree upon the terms of an accommodation. And Sir Francis Walsingham proposed to them from the queen, that a few things in the Established Church, to which they most objected, should be abolished. But they answered loftily, in the language of Moses, “That not an hoof should be left behind.” This irreconcilable temper gave great offence not only to the churchmen, but to the more serious of their own persuasion. The government from this time slighting them, they appealed to the people; and by the popular artifice of decrying authority, they soon became considerable.—Such were the beginnings of those dissensions which our prudent forefathers entailed on their posterity!

The dissenters having thus formed their party among the people, endeavoured to strengthen it by soliciting every where the most creditable persons in favour of it. Very early applications were made to Mr. Gilpin. His refusal of the bishopric of Carlisle had given them favourable sentiments of him, and

great hopes that in his heart he had no dislike to their cause. But they soon found their mistake. He was wholly dissatisfied with their proceedings. Religious disputes were in his opinion of such dangerous consequence, that he always thought when true Christianity, under any form of church government, was once established in a country, that form ought not to be altered, unless blameable in some very material points. "The reformation," he said, "was just: essentials were there concerned. But at present he saw no ground for dissatisfaction. The church of England, he thought, gave no reasonable offence. Some things there might be in it, which had been perhaps as well avoided*: but to

* It is probable he here means particularly the use of vestments, which gave a good deal of offence at that time. —Bishop Burnet, speaking of some letters he saw at Zurich between Bullinger and some of the reformed bishops, has the following paragraph, which it will not be improper to quote at length, as it gives us a good idea of those times.

"Most of these letters contain only the general news, but some were more important, and relate to the disputes then on foot concerning the habits of the clergy, which gave the first beginnings to our unhappy divisions; and by the letters, of which I read the originals, it appears that the bishops preserved their ancient habits rather in compliance with the queen's inclinations, than out of any liking they had to them; so far were they from liking them, that they plainly expressed their dislike of them. Jewel, in a letter bearing date the 8th of February, 1566, wishes that the vestments, together with all the other remains of popery, might be thrown both out of their churches, and out of the minds of the people, and laments the queen's fixedness to them: so that she would suffer no change to be made.—And in January the same year, Sandys writes to the same purpose. 'Contenditur de vestibus papisticis utendis vel non utendis, dabit Deus his quoque finem.' Disputes are now on foot concerning the popish vestments, whether they should be used or not,

disturb the peace of a nation for such trifles," he thought, " was quite unchristian."—And indeed what appeared to him chiefly blameable in the dis-

but God will put an end to these things.—Horn, bishop of Winchester went further : for in a letter dated July 16, 1565, he writes of the act concerning the habits with great regret ; and expresses some hopes that it might be repealed next session of parliament, if the popish party did not hinder it ; and he seems to stand in doubt whether he should conform himself to it or not, upon which he desires Bullinger's advice. And in many letters writ on that subject, it is asserted, that both Cranmer and Ridley intended to procure an act for abolishing the habits, and that they only defended their lawfulness, but not their fitness, and therefore they blamed private persons that refused to obey the laws.—Grindal in a letter dated the 27th of August, 1566, writes, that all the bishops, who had been beyond the sea, had at their return dealt with the queen to let the matter of the habits fall : but she was so prepossessed, that though they had all endeavoured to divert her from prosecuting that matter, she continued still inflexible. This had made them resolve to submit to the laws, and to wait for a fit opportunity to reverse them. He laments the ill effects of the opposition that some had made to them, which had extremely irritated the queen's spirit, so that she was now much more heated in those matters than formerly ; he also thanks Bullinger for the letter he had writ, justifying the lawful use of the habits, which, he says, had done great service.—Cox, bishop of Ely, in one of his letters, laments the aversion that they found in the parliament to all the propositions that were made for the reformation of abuses.—Jewel, in a letter dated the 22d of May, 1559, writes that the queen refused to be called head of the church, and adds, that that title could not justly be given to any mortal, it being due only to Christ ; and that such titles had been so much abused by Antichrist, that they ought not to be any longer continued.—On all these passages I will make no reflections here: for I set them down only to shew what was the sense of our chief churchmen at that time concerning

senters, was, that heat of temper, with which they propagated their opinions, and treated those who differed from them. Neither episcopal nor presbyterian government, nor caps, nor surplices, nor any external things, were matters with him half so interesting, as peace and charity among Christians : and this was his constant topic in all his occasional conversations with that party.

Such however was the opinion they entertained of him, that notwithstanding these casual intimations of his dislike to them, they still persisted in their endeavours to gain him to their side. The chief of them failed not to set before him what they had to say of most weight against the established discipline ; and a person of esteemed abilities among them came on purpose from Cambridge to discourse with him on the best form of ecclesiastical government. But this agent did his cause little credit. With no great learning he had an insupportable vanity ; and seemed to take it for granted, that himself and Calvin were the two greatest men in the world. His discourse had nothing of argument in it ; an indecent invective against episcopacy was the sum of it. He was so full of himself, that Mr. Gilpin thought it to no purpose to reason with him, and therefore avoided whatever could lead them into a dispute.

Some time after Mr. Gilpin heard, that his late visitant had reported him to have affirmed, speaking about the primitive times, that “ the virtues of the moderns were not equal even to the infirmities of the fathers.” He said indeed he remembered some such thing coming from him ; but not in the pointed manner in which it was represented. His adversary had been decrying the fathers greatly, declaring

those matters, which have since engaged us in such warm and angry disputes ; and this may be no inconsiderable instruction to one that intends to write the history of that time.”—Dr. Burnet’s Travels, let. 1.

there were men in this age much their superiors, plainly intimating whom he principally intended. Such arrogance, Mr. Gilpin said, he was desirous to mortify; and meant it of such moderns as him, when he asserted that their virtues were not equal to the infirmities of the fathers.

The success the dissenters had met with in their private applications, encouraged them to try what farther might be had by a public attack on the national church. Their great champion was Dr. Cartwright, who wrote with much bitterness against it. His book was immediately dispersed over the nation, received by the party with loud acclamations, and every where considered as unanswerable.

Soon after it was published, it was zealously put into Mr. Gilpin's hands. The gentleman who sent it, one Dr. Birch, a warm friend to the principles advanced in it, desired he would read it carefully and communicate to him his remarks. But very impatient for them, he sent a messenger, before Mr. Gilpin had read the book half through. He returned it however, with the following lines, which shew his opinion of church-government in general.

*"Multa quidem legi, sed plura legenda reliqui;
Posthac, cum dabitur copia, cuncta legam.
Optant ut Careat maculis ecclesia cunctis;
Præsens vita negat; vita futura dabit."*

Though Mr. Gilpin was thus greatly dissatisfied with the disorderly zeal which the more violent of the dissenters expressed, attended, as he observed it was, with such fatal consequences, he confined however, his dislike to their errors; to their persons he bore not the least ill-will. Nay, one of the most intimate friends he ever had was Mr. Lever, a minister of their persuasion, and a sufferer in their cause.

This gentleman had been head of a college in Cambridge, and afterwards prebendary of Durham, and

master of Sherborn hospital. He was a man of good parts, considerable learning, and very exemplary piety; and had been esteemed in king Edward's time an eminent and bold preacher. During the succeeding confusion he settled at Arrow in Switzerland, where he was teacher to a congregation of English exiles. Here he became a favourer of Calvin's opinions; and at his return home was considered as one of the principal of the dissenting party. The very great indiscretions already mentioned, of a few violent men, soon made that whole party obnoxious to the government; to which nothing perhaps contributed more than the seditious application of that doctrine to Elizabeth, which had been formerly propagated against female government by Knox and Goodman in the reign of her sister. This was touching that jealous queen in a very sensible part; and induced her, perhaps too rigorously, though she was really ill used, to press uniformity.—Among others Mr. Lever suffered: he was convened before the archbishop of York, and deprived of his ecclesiastical preferment. Many of the cooler churchmen thought him hardly dealt with, as he was really a moderate man, and not forward in opposing the received opinions.

Mr. Gilpin was among those who pitied his treatment; nor did he scruple to express his usual regard for him, though it was not a thing the most agreeable to his superiors. But he had too much honour to sacrifice friendship to popular prejudice; and thought, that they, who agreed in essentials, should not be estranged from each other for their different sentiments on points of less importance.

As Mr. Gilpin was thus solicited on one hand by the dissenters, so was he on the other by the papists. It had long been a mortification to all the well-meaning of that persuasion, that so good a man had left their communion; and no methods were left untried to bring him back. But his change had been a work

of too much caution to be repented of: so that all their endeavours proved, as it was easy to suppose they would, ineffectual.

A letter of his, written upon an occasion of this kind, may here not improperly be inserted, to shew how well satisfied he was at this time with having left the church of Rome; and how unlikely it was that he should ever again become a member of it. I wish I could give this letter in its original simplicity. The manuscript indeed is still extant; but it is so mutilated, that it is impossible to transcribe a fair copy. The bishop of Chichester however hath given a Latin translation of it, from which I shall take as much as is worth preserving. It was written in answer to a long letter from one Mr. Gelthorpe, a relation of Mr. Gilpin's, who being a warm papist himself, was very uneasy that his kinsman and friend should be a protestant; concluding his letter thus:

“—————Now, I beseech you, remember what God hath called you to; and beware of passionate doings. I know you have suffered under great slanders and evil reports; yet you may, by God's grace, bridle all affections, and be an upright man. The report of you is great at London, and in all other places; so that in my opinion you shall in these days, even shortly, either do much good, leaning to the truth; or else (which I pray God turn away from us!) you shall do as much evil to the church as ever Arius did.”

To this letter the following was Mr. Gilpin's answer.

“I received your letter when I had very little time to answer it, as the bearer can inform you. I did not care however to send him back without some return, though in the latter part of your letter you say enough to tempt me to do so. For what encouragement have I to write, when you tell me, you are predetermined not to be persuaded! It could not but damp the prophet's zeal, when he cried out,

‘Hear the word of the Lord; to be answered by a stubborn people, ‘We will not hear.’—But let us leave events to God, who can soften the heart of man, and give sense to the deaf adder, which shutteth her ears.

“You look back, you say, upon past ages. But how far? If you would carry your view as high as Christ, and his apostles; nay, only as high as the primitive times, and examine them without prejudice; you could not but see a strange alteration of things, and acknowledge that a thousand errors and absurdities have crept into the church, while men slept.

“It grieves me to hear you talk of your concern for the suppression of abbeys and monasteries; numbers even of your own communion have confessed, that it was impossible for them to stand longer. They were grown into such monstrous sanctuaries of vice, that their cry, no doubt, like that of Sodom, ascended into the ears of God. Besides, consider what pests they were to all good learning and religion; how they preyed upon all the rectories in the kingdom; amassing to themselves, for the support of their vices, that wealth, which was meant by pious founders for the maintenance of industrious clergymen.

“He that cometh to God, you say, must believe. Without doubt: but I would have you consider, that religious faith can have no foundation but the word of God. He, whose creed is founded upon bulls, indulgences, and such trumpery, can have no true faith. All these things will vanish, where the word of God hath efficacy.

“You say, you cannot see any thing in the Romish church contrary to the Gospel: I should think, if you looked narrowly into it, you might see the Gospel entirely rejected; and in its room, legends, traditions, and a thousand other absurdities introduced.—But this is an extensive subject, and I have

little leisure. Some other time probably I may write more largely upon these points. May God in the mean time open your eyes to see 'the abomination of the city upon seven hills.' Rev. xvii. Consult St. Jerome upon this passage.

"You use the phrase, 'If you should now begin to drink of another cup;' whereas you never drank of any cup at all. How can you defend, I would gladly know, this single corruption; or reconcile it with that express command of Christ, 'Drink ye all of this;' I am sure, if you can defend it, it was more than any of your learned doctors at Louvain could do, as I myself can witness.

"As to our being called heretics, and avoided by you, we are extremely indifferent: we appeal from your uncharitable censures to Almighty God; and say with St. Paul, 'we little esteem to be judged of you, it is the Lord who judgeth us.'

"But you say it is dangerous to hear us. So said the persecutors of St. Stephen, and stopped their ears. So likewise Amaziah behaved to the prophet Amos. David likewise speaks of such men, comparing them 'to the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears.' And we have instances of the same kind of bigotry in the writings of the evangelists; where we often read of men, whose minds the god of this world hath blinded.

"As for the terrible threatenings of your bishop, we are under no apprehension from them. They are calculated only for the nursery. Erasmus properly calls them *bruta fulmina*. If the pope and his cardinals, who curse us with so much bitterness, were like Peter and Paul; if they discovered that fervent charity, that extensive benevolence, and noble zeal in their master's cause, which distinguished those apostles, then were there some reason to dread their censures: but alas! they have changed the humility of Peter into the pride of Lucifer; the labours and

poverty of Apostles into the sloth and luxury of eastern monarchs.

“I am far from thinking there is no difference between consubstantiality and transubstantiation. The former undoubtedly hath many texts of Scripture for its support; the latter certainly none: nay, it hath so confounded many of its most zealous assertors, Scotus, Occam, Biel, and others, that it is plain how perplexed they are to get over the many difficulties that arise from it. Indeed Scotus thought, as bishop Tunstal would ingenuously confess, that the church had better make use of some less laboured exposition of those words in Scripture. And the good bishop himself likewise, though he would have men speak reverently of the sacrament, as the primitive church did, yet always said that transubstantiation might well have been let alone. As to what Mr. Chedsey said, ‘That the catholics would do well to give way in the article of transubstantiation,’ I cannot say I heard him speak the words myself, but I had them from a person who did.

“I am far from agreeing with you, that the lives of so many vicious popes should be passed over in silence. If the vices of churchmen should thus be concealed, I know not how you will defend Christ for rebuking the pharisees, who were the holy fathers of those times: or the prophet Isaiah, who is for having good and evil distinguished; and denounces a curse upon those, ‘who call him holy that is not holy:’ or St. Bernard likewise, who scruples not to call some wicked priests in his time the ministers of Antichrist. Such examples may excuse us.

“Five sacraments, you say, are rejected by us. You mistake: we use them still as the Scripture authorizes. Nay, even to the name of sacrament we have no objection; only suffer us to give our own explanation of it. I find washing of feet, and many other things of the same kind, are called sacraments

by some old writers ; but the fathers, and some of the best of the schoolmen are of opinion, that only baptism and the Lord's Supper can properly be called sacraments.

“I am surprised to hear you establish on a few easy passages in St. Paul, the several ridiculous ceremonies of the mass ; surely you cannot be ignorant, that most of them were invented long afterwards by the bishops of Rome—How much you observe St. Paul upon other occasions, is evident from your strange abuse of the institution of bread and wine. There it signifies nothing what the apostle says : tradition is the better authority :

“You tell me you can prove the use of prayers for the dead from Scripture. I know you mean the book of Maccabees. But our church follows the opinion of the fathers in saying, that these books are profitable for manners, but not to be used in establishing doctrines.

“St. Austin, you say, doubts whether there be not a purgatory. And so because he doubts it, the church of Rome establisheth it as an article of faith. Now I think if she had reasoned right from the saint's doubts, she should at least have left it indifferent. Faith, you know St. James says, ought not to waver. The bishop of Rochester, who was a diligent searcher into antiquity, says, that among the antients there is little or no mention made of purgatory. For myself, I am apt to think, it was first introduced by that grand popish traffick of indulgences.

“As to what you say about the invocation of saints, St. Austin, you know, himself exhorteth his readers not to ground their faith upon his writings, but on the Scriptures. And indeed, I think, there is nothing in the whole word of God more plainly declared to us than this, that God alone must be the object of our adoration. ‘How shall they call on him,’ saith St. Paul, ‘in whom they have not believed?’ If we believe in one God only, why should

we pray to any more? The popish distinction between invocation and advocacy, is poor sophistry. As we are told, we must pray only to one God, so we read likewise of only one advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.—You say you believe in the communion of saints; and infer, that no communion with them can subsist, unless we pray to them: but our church understands quite another thing by the communion of saints: for the word saint is a common Scripture epithet for a good Christian; nor doth it once signify, in either testament, as far as I can remember, a departed soul: nay, sometimes the words are very express, as in the sixteenth psalm, ‘To the saints which be on earth.’ If any man ever had a communion with the saints in heaven, surely David had it: but he never speaks of any communion with which he was acquainted, but with the saints on earth.—And thus likewise St. John speaks, ‘What we have seen and known, that declare we unto you, that you may have fellowship, or communion with us, and that our communion may be with God, and with his son Jesus Christ.’ 1 John i. 3. All the members of the church of Christ have communion among themselves: which communion consists chiefly in mutual prayers and preaching. Secondly, the church of Christ hath communion with the father and the son, or with the father through the son. That such communion as this exists, we have good authority; but none at all for a belief in a communion with departed souls: these, as I observed before, are never in Scripture called saints; but generally described by some such periphrasis as ‘The congregation of the first-born in heaven;’ or, ‘the spirits of just men made perfect.’ In the next world probably with these likewise we may have communion; but they who expect it in this, must either bring Scripture for what they say, or come under our Saviour’s censure, ‘In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men.’

Matt. xv. 9.—Indeed, by the custom of late ages departed souls are called saints; but I hope I need not inform you that the Holy Scripture is a more proper directory, than the custom of any age—But it is needless to dispute upon this point, because even the most zealous defenders of it acknowledge it to be a thing indifferent, whether we pray immediately to God, or through the mediation of saints. And if it be a thing indifferent, sure a wise man knows what to do.

“As for what you say about images, and fasting, (the proper use of which latter God forbid that I should say any thing against) together with your arguments in favour of reliques, and exorcisms, I could without any sort of difficulty reply to them: but at this time you really must excuse me: it is not an apology of course when I assure you, that I am now extremely busy. You will the more easily believe me, when I tell you I am at present without a curate; and that I am likewise a good deal out of order, and hardly able to undergo the necessary fatigues of my office.

“As to your not choosing to come to Houghton on a Sunday for fear of offending my people, to say the truth, except you will come to church, which I think you might do very well, I should not much desire to see you on that day; for country people are strangely given to copy a bad example; and will unlearn more in a day, than they have been learning for a month.—You must excuse my freedom: you know my heart; and how gladly I would have it to say, ‘Of those whom thou gavest me have I lost none.’ But on any other day, or if you will come on Sunday night, and stay a week with me, I shall be glad to see you. We may then talk over these things with more freedom: and though, as I observed before, the latter part of your letter gives me no great encouragement, yet I will endeavour to have a better hope of you, than you have of your-

self. St. Paul, in the early part of his life, was fully persuaded that he should die a pharisee, and an enemy to the cross of Christ: but there was a reserve of mercy in store for him; and through God's grace, his heart became so changed, that he suffered persecution himself for that name, which it had been before his ambition to persecute.

“May the great God of heaven make you an object of the same mercy, and by the spirit of knowledge lead your mind into all truth.

“I am, &c.

“BERNARD GILPIN.”

SECTION VII.

The public generally sees us in disguise: the case is, we ordinarily pay a greater deference to the world's opinion than to our own consciences. Hence a man's real merit is very improperly estimated from the more exposed part of his behaviour.

The passages of Mr. Gilpin's life already collected, are chiefly of a public nature; if we may thus call any action of a life so private. To place his merit therefore in its truest light, it will be necessary to accompany him in his retirement; and view his ordinary behaviour, from which all restraint was taken off.

When he first took upon him the care of a parish, he set himself to consider how he might best perform the charge intrusted to him. The pastoral care he saw, was much neglected: the greater part of the clergy, he could not but observe, were scandalously negligent of it; and even they, who seemed desirous of being accounted serious in the discharge of their ministry, too often, he thought, considered it in a light widely different from its true one. Some, he observed, made it consist in asserting the rights

of the church, and the dignity of their function : others, in a strenuous opposition to the prevailing sectaries, and a zealous attachment to the established church-government ; a third sort, in examining the speculative points, and mystical parts of religion : few of them in the mean time considering, either in what the true dignity of the ministerial character consisted ; or the only end for which church-government was at all established ; or the practical influence, which can alone make speculative points worth our attention.—All this he observed with concern, resolving to pursue a different path, and to follow the laudable example of those few, who made the pastoral care to consist in a strenuous endeavour to amend the lives of those they were concerned with, and to promote their truest happiness both here and hereafter.

The strange disorder of that part of the country where his lot fell, hath already been observed. The extreme of ignorance, and of course of superstition, was its characteristic. The great care of Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, his frequent and strict visitations, his severe inquiries into the ministry of the clergy, and manners of the laity, had made a very visible alteration in the southern parts of England ; but in the north, reformation went on but sluggishly. The indolent archbishop of York slept over his province. In what great disorder the good bishop Grindal found it, upon his translation thither, in the year 1570, appears from his episcopal injunctions, among which it is ordered, that no pedlar should be admitted to sell his wares in the church porch in time of service—that parish clerks should be able to read—that no lords of misrule, or summer lords and ladies, or any disguised persons, morrice-dancers, or others, should come irreverently into the church, or play any unseemly parts with scoffs, jests, wanton gestures, or ribald talk, in the time of divine service.—From

these things we may conceive the state of the parish of Houghton, when Mr. Gilpin came there.

He set out with making it his endeavour to gain the affection of his parishioners. Many of his papers shew how material a point he considered this. To succeed in it however he used no servile compliances: he would have his means good, as well as his end. His behaviour was free without familiarity; and insinuating without art: he condescended to the weak, bore with the passionate, complied with the scrupulous; and in a truly apostolic manner, "became all things to all men." By these means he gained mightily upon his neighbours, and convinced them how heartily he was their friend.

To his humanity and courtesy he added an unwearied application to the duties of his function. He was not satisfied with the advice he gave in public, but used to instruct in private; and brought his parishioners to come to him with their doubts and difficulties. He had an engaging manner towards those, whom he thought well-disposed: nay his very reproof was so conducted, that it seldom gave offence; the becoming gentleness with which it was urged made it always appear the effect of friendship. Thus laying himself out in admonishing the vicious, and encouraging the well-intentioned, in a few years he made a greater change in his neighbourhood, than could well have been imagined—a remarkable instance, what reformation a single man may effect, when he hath it earnestly at heart.

But his hopes were not so much in the present, as in the succeeding generation. It was an easier task, he found, to prevent vice than to correct it: to form good habits in the young, than to amend bad habits in the old. He laid out much of his time therefore in an endeavour to improve the minds of the younger part of his parish. Nor did he only take notice of those within his school, but in general extended his

care through the whole place: suffering none to grow up in an ignorance of their duty: but pressing it as the wisest part to mix religion with their labour; and amidst the cares of this life to have a constant eye upon the next.

Nor did he omit whatever besides might be of service to his parishioners.

He was very assiduous in preventing law suits among them. His hall was often thronged with people who came to him with their differences. He was not indeed much acquainted with law, but he could decide equitably, and that satisfied: nor could his sovereign's commission have given more weight than his own character gave him.

He had a just concern for all under affliction; and was a much readier visitant at the house of mourning, than at that of feasting: and his large fund of reading and experience always furnished something that was properly affecting. Hence he was considered as a good angel by all in distress.—When the infirmities of age came upon him, and he grew less able to endure exercise, it was his custom to write letters of consolation to such as were in affliction*.

* The following letter of this kind the reader may perhaps think worth his perusal.

“After my most due commendations, I beseech you, gentle Mrs. Carr, diligently to call to mind how mercifully God hath dealt with you in many respects. He hath given you a gentleman of worship to be your husband; one that I know loveth you dearly, as a Christian man should love his wife. And by him God hath blessed you with a goodly family of children, which both you and your husband must take to be the favourable and free gift of God.—But, good Mrs. Carr, you must understand that both that gift of God, and all others, and we ourselves are in his hands: he takes what he will, whom he will, and when he will; and whomsoever he taketh, in youth, or in age, we must fully persuade ourselves, that he ordereth all things for the best. We may not murmur,

He used to interpose likewise in all acts of oppression; and his authority was such, that it generally put a stop to them.

or think much at any of his doings: but must learn to speak from our hearts the petition of the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' It is unto this holy obedience that St. Peter calleth all Christians, saying 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.'—This godly submission did cause the holy patriarch Job, when it pleased God to take from him not only one, but all his children, seven brethren and sisters, upon one day, never to grieve himself with what God had done, but meekly to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'—And here I would have you, good Mrs. Carr, to consider, how small cause you have to mourn, or fall into a deep sorrow, in comparison of the holy patriarch. God hath taken from you only one young daughter, and hath left you a goodly family of children, which, I trust, with good education, will prove a blessed comfort to you.—This example of Job, and other examples in holy Scripture, being written (as the apostle saith) for our admonition, I must needs declare you to be worthy of great blame, if you continue any space in such great sorrow and heaviness, as I hear you take for your young daughter. St. Peter saith, that Christ Jesus suffered for us most cruel torments, and last of all a most cruel death, 'to leave us an example, that all who believe in him should follow his blessed steps:' that is, to bear his cross, to be armed with all patience, whensoever we lose any thing that we love in this world. And the same apostle saith, 'Seeing Christ hath suffered for us in his body, all you that are Christians must be armed with the same thought.'—Furthermore the Scripture saith, that unto us it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. And St. Paul, in the viiith to the Romans, hath a most comfortable sentence to all that will learn to suffer with him; and a most fearful sentence to all those that refuse to suffer with him, and to bear his cross; 'The spirit,' saith he, 'beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of

A person against whom the country at that time exclaimed very much, was one Mr. Barns, a near relation, if not a brother of Dr. Barns, bishop of Durham, who raised him through some inferior posts to the chancellorship of his diocese. Between this

God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ; (it followeth) 'if so be that we suffer together with him, that we may also be glorified with him.' And St. Paul, in the first chapter of the second to the Corinthians, saith to all the faithful, "As ye are companions of those things, which Christ hath suffered, so shall ye be companions of his consolations."—All these things considered, I doubt not, good Mrs. Carr, but that you will arm yourself with patience, and bear Christ's cross, learning to suffer for his sake, and that, were it a greater loss than you have, God be praised, as yet sustained.—Let your faith overcome your sorrow. St. Paul writing to the Thessalonians concerning the dead (who, he saith, have but fallen asleep) forbiddeth them not to mourn, but utterly forbiddeth them to mourn like gentiles, and infidels, who have no hope in Christ. And the wise man, (Ecclus. xxii.) doth exhort us to mourn over the dead, so it be but for a little space: 'Weep,' saith he, 'for the dead, but only for a little time, because they are gone to their rest.' So you see there is an unreasonable mourning of them that want faith; and there is also a temperate and lawful mourning of them that have a stedfast belief in Christ, and his promises, 'which (St. John saith) overcometh all the temptations (that is, the troubles) of the world.' I trust verily, good Mrs. Carr, that your mourning being temperate will shew itself to be a faithful, not a faithless mourning; which latter I pray Almighty God to keep from you—But I fear to be tedious. I trust one day I shall be able to come unto you myself. In the mean space, and evermore, I shall pray that the God of all consolation may comfort you in all your troubles.

"Your loving friend in Christ

"BERNARD GILPIN."

Houghton, May 31, 1583.

man and Mr. Gilpin, there was a perpetual opposition for many years; the latter endeavouring to counteract the former, and to be the redressor of those injuries, of which he was the author. Several traces of these contests still remain among Mr. Gilpin's papers; from which it appears what a constant check upon his designs Mr. Barns found him; though he was always treated in a mild and affectionate manner. "It will be but a very few years," Mr. Gilpin tells him, (concluding a letter written in favour of three orphans, whom Mr. Barns had defrauded of their patrimony) "before you and I must give up our great accounts. I pray God give us both the grace to have them in a constant readiness. And may you take what I have written in as friendly a manner as it is meant. My daily prayers are made for you to Almighty God, whom I beseech evermore to preserve you."

Thus he lived in his parish, careful only to discharge his duty: no fatigue or difficulty could excuse him to himself for the omission of any part of it: the religious improvement of his people was his principal endeavour, and the success of this endeavour his principal happiness.

Notwithstanding however, all this painful industry, and the large scope it had in so extended a parish, he thought the sphere of his labours yet too confined. It grieved him to see every where in the parishes around him so much ignorance and superstition; occasioned by the very great neglect of the pastoral care in those parts. How ill supplied the northern churches at this time were, hath already been observed; and will still appear in a stronger light, if we compare the state of these churches with that of those in the southern parts of the island, which were universally allowed to have been less neglected. Of one diocese, that of Ely, where the clergy do not appear to have been uncommonly remiss, we have a curious account still preserved: it contained one

hundred and fifty-six parishes ; of which forty-seven had no ministers at all, fifty-seven were in the hands of careless non-residents, and only the remaining fifty-two were regularly served.

The very bad consequences arising from this shameful remissness among the clergy, induced Mr. Gilpin to supply, as far as he could, what was wanting in others. Every year therefore he used regularly to visit the most neglected parishes in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland: and that his own parish, in the mean time might not suffer, he had a constant assistant. In each place he stayed two or three days, and his method was, to call the people about him, and lay before them, in as plain a way as possible, the danger of leading wicked and careless lives—explaining to them the nature of true religion—instructing them in the duties they owed to God, their neighbour and themselves—and shewing them how greatly a religious conduct would contribute to their present as well as future happiness.

When a preacher, though the merest rhapsodist, seems to speak from his heart, what he says will be listened to. The appearance of his being truly in earnest, will dispose men at least to give him a fair hearing. Hence Mr. Gilpin, who had all the warmth of an enthusiast, though under the direction of a very calm judgment, never wanted an audience even in the wildest parts ; where he roused many to a sense of religion, who had contracted the most inveterate habits of inattention.

One thing he practised, which shewed the best disposed heart. Wherever he came, he used to visit the jails and places of confinement, (few in the kingdom having at that time any appointed minister;) and by his labours, and affectionate manner of behaving, he is said to have reformed many very abandoned persons in those places. He would employ his interest likewise for such criminals, whose cases

he thought attended with any hard circumstances, and often procured pardons for them.

There is a tract of country upon the border of Northumberland, called Reads-dale and Tine-dale; of all barbarous places in the north, at that time the most barbarous. The following description of this wild country we have from Mr. Camden:

“At Walwick, North Tyne crosses the Roman wall. It rises in the mountains on the borders of England and Scotland; and first running eastward, waters Tine-dale, which hath thence its name, and afterwards embracing the river Read, which falling from the steep hill of Readsquire, where the lord-wardens of the eastern marches used to determine the disputes of the borderers, gives its name to a valley, too thinly inhabited, by reason of the frequent robberies committed there. Both these dales breed notable bogtrotters, and have such boggy-topped mountains, as are not to be crossed by ordinary horsemen. We wonder too see so many heaps of stones in them, which the neighbourhood believe to be thrown together in memory of some persons there slain. There are also in both of them many ruins of old forts. The Umfranvils held Reads-dale, as doomsday-book informs us, in fee and knights’ service for guarding the dale from robberies. All over these wastes you see, as it were, the ancient Nomades, a martial people, who from April to August lie in little tents, which they call sheals or shealings, here and there dispersed among their flocks.”

Before the union, this country was generally called the debateable land, as subject by turns to England and Scotland, and the common theatre where the two nations were continually acting a variety of bloody scenes. It was inhabited, as Mr. Camden hath just informed us, by a kind of desperate banditti, rendered fierce and active by constant alarms. They lived by theft; used to plunder on both sides of the barrier, and what they plundered on one, they

exposed to sale on the other ; by that evasion escaping justice. Such adepts were they in the art of thieving, that they could twist a cow's horn, or mark a horse, so as its owners could not know it ; and so subtle, that no vigilance could guard against them. For these arts they were long afterwards famous. A person telling king James a surprising story of a cow that had been driven from the north of Scotland into the south of England, and escaping from the herd, had found her way home ; " The most surprising part of the story," the king replied, " you lay least stress on, that she passed unstolen through the debateable land."

In this dreadful country, where no man would even travel that could help it, Mr. Gilpin never failed to spend some part of every year. He generally chose the holydays of Christmas for his journey, because he found the people at that season most disengaged, and most easily assembled. He had set places for preaching, which were as regularly attended, as the assize-towns of a circuit. If he came where there was a church, he made use of it : if not, of barns, or any other large building ; where great crouds of people were sure to attend him, some for his instructions, and others for his charity.

This was a very difficult and laborious employment. The badness of the weather and the badness of the roads through a mountainous country, and at that season covered with snow, exposed him often to great hardships. Sometimes he was overtaken by the night, (the country being in many places desolate for several miles together,) and, as the bishop of Chichester relates, obliged to lodge in the cold : at such times he would make his servant ride about with his horses, whilst himself on foot used as much exercise as his age and the fatigues of the preceding day would permit.—All this he cheerfully underwent ; esteeming such sufferings well compen-

sated by the advantages which he hoped might accrue from them to his uninstructed fellow-creatures.

Our Saxon ancestors had a great aversion to the tedious forms of law. They chose rather to determine their disputes in a more concise manner, pleading generally with their swords. "Let every dispute be decided by the sword," was a Saxon law. A piece of ground was described, and covered with mats: here the plaintiff and defendant tried their cause. If either of them was driven from this boundary, he was obliged to redeem his life by three marks. He whose blood first stained the ground, lost his suit*.

This custom still prevailed on the borders, where Saxon barbarism held its latest possession. These wild Northumbrians indeed went beyond the ferocity of their ancestors. They were not content with a duel: each contending party used to muster what adherents he could, and commence a kind of petty war†. So that a private grudge would often occasion much bloodshed.

It happened that a quarrel of this kind was on foot, when Mr. Gilpin was at Rothbury. During the two or three first days of his preaching, the contending parties observed some decorum, and never appeared at church together. At length however

* See Spelman, Nicholson, and other inquirers into the antiquities of those times.

† The people of this country have had one very barbarous custom among them. If any two be displeased, they expect no law, but bang it out bravely, one and his kindred against the other and his. They will subject themselves to no justice, but in an inhuman and barbarous manner; fight and kill one another. They run together in clans, as they term it, or names. This fighting they call their deadly feides. Of late, since the union of both kingdoms, this heathenish custom is repressed, and good laws made against such barbarous and unchristian misdemeanours. Survey of Newcastle, Harleyan Miscellany; vol. 3.

they met. One party had been early at church, and just as Mr. Gilpin had began his sermon, the other entered. They stood not long silent. Inflamed at the sight of each other, they began to clash their weapons, for they were all armed with javelins and swords, and mutually approached. Awed however by the sacredness of the place, the tumult in some degree ceased. Mr. Gilpin proceeded: when again the combatants began to brandish their weapons, and draw towards each other. As a fray seemed near, Mr. Gilpin stepped from the pulpit, went between them, and addressing the leaders, put an end to the quarrel for the present; but could not effect an entire reconciliation. They promised however, that till the sermon was over, they would make no more disturbance. He then went again into the pulpit, and spent the rest of the time in endeavouring to make them ashamed of what they had done. His behaviour and discourse affected them so much, that at his farther entreaty, they promised to forbear all acts of hostility, while he continued in the country. And so much respected was he among them, that whoever was in fear of his enemy, or, in the usual phrase, of his deadly foe, used to resort where Mr. Gilpin was, esteeming his presence the best protection.

One sunday morning coming to a church in those parts before the people were assembled, he observed a glove hanging up, and was informed by the sexton, that it was meant as a challenge to any one that should take it down. Mr. Gilpin ordered the sexton to reach it to him; but upon his utterly refusing to touch it, he took it down himself, and put in his breast. When the people were assembled, he went into the pulpit; and before he concluded his sermon, took occasion to rebuke them severely for these inhuman challenges. "I hear," saith he, "that one among you hath hanged up a glove, even in this sacred place, threatening to fight any one who taketh it down; see, I have taken it down:" and pulling

out the glove, he held it up to the congregation ; and then shewed them how unsuitable such savage practices were to the profession of Christianity ; using such persuasives to mutual love, as he thought would most affect them.

The disinterested pains he thus took among these barbarous people, and the good offices he was always ready to do them, drew from them the sincerest expressions of gratitude. Indeed he was little less than adored, and might have brought the whole country almost to what he pleased.—How greatly his name was revered among them one instance will shew.

By the carelessness of his servant, his horses were one day stolen. The news was quickly propagated, and every one expressed the highest indignation at the fact. The thief was rejoicing over his prize, when by the report of the country he found whose horses he had taken. Terrified at what he had done, he instantly came trembling back, confessed the fact, returned the horses, and declared he believed the devil would have seized him directly, had he carried them off, knowing them to have been Mr. Gilpin's.

Thus I have brought together what particulars remain of this excellent man's behaviour as a minister of the Gospel. They discover so very good a heart, so strong a sense of duty, and so strict a regard to it in every instance, as would have been admired even in primitive times : the corruptions now prevailing may perhaps make their truth questionable ; but they are all either taken from his life written by the bishop of Chichester, or from papers of undoubted authority *.—His own testimony to

* These papers were lent to the author by the late worthy rector of Houghton, Dr. Stonhewer ; and are still probably preserved in the parsonage house.

what hath been said shall be subjoined in the following extract.

"I am at present," says he, (apologizing to a friend) "much charged with business, or rather overcharged. I am at first greatly burdened about seeing the lands made sure to the school; which are not so yet, and are in great danger to be lost, if God should call me afore they are assured. Moreover I have assigned to preach twelve sermons at other parishes, beside my own; and likewise am earnestly looked for at a number of parishes in Northumberland, more than I can visit. Beside I am continually encumbered with many guests and acquaintance, whom I may not well refuse. And often I am called upon by many of my parishioners, to set them at one, when they cannot agree. And every day I am sore charged and troubled with many servants and workfolks, which is no small trouble to me; for the buildings and reparations in this wide house will never have an end."

I shall conclude this section with an instance of that resolution, and spirit, which on each proper occasion he failed not to exert; and by which he always maintained that independence and real dignity which became his station.

He received a message one day from Dr. Barns, bishop of Darham, appointing him to preach a visitation sermon the sunday following. It happened he was then preparing for his journey into Reads-dale and Tine-dale; and acquainted the bishop with the necessity of his keeping that appointment, begging his lordship would at that time excuse him. His servant informed him that the bishop had received his message, but returned no answer. Concluding him therefore satisfied, he set out on his journey: but to his great surprize, when he came home, he found himself suspended; some persons, through enmity to him, having put the bishop upon this hasty step. A few days after he received an order to meet

the bishop at Chester, a town in the diocese of Durham, where the bishops of that see formerly resided. Here many of the clergy were assembled, and Mr. Gilpin was ordered by the bishop to preach that day before them. He made his apology; he had come wholly unprepared—besides he was suspended, and thereby excluded from the pulpit. The bishop answered, he took off his suspension. But Mr. Gilpin still begged to be excused—he had brought no sermon with him, and hoped none would be required from him. But the bishop would take no excuse; telling him, that as he had been a preacher so long, he must be able to say enough to the purpose without any previous meditation. Mr. Gilpin persisting in his refusal, the bishop at length grew warm, and required him upon his canonical obedience to go immediately into the pulpit. After a little delay therefore, he went up; and though he observed several taking notes of what he said, he proceeded without the least hesitation.

The ecclesiastical court of Durham was at this time very scandalously governed. That Mr. Barns presided over it, who hath already been mentioned; and who made it indeed little better than an office for granting indulgences. The bishop was a well-meaning, weak man; irresolute, and wholly in the hands of others. Every thing was managed by his relation the chancellor; whose venality, and the irregularities occasioned by it, were most notorious.

The opportunity now afforded him, Mr. Gilpin thought no unfavourable one to open the bishop's eyes; and induce him to exert himself where there was so great reason for it. Private information had often been given him without any success: Mr. Gilpin was now resolved therefore to venture upon a public application to him. Accordingly, before he concluded his sermon, he turned towards the bishop, to whom he thus addressed himself.

“My discourse, now, reverend father, must be

directed to you. God hath exalted you to be the bishop of this diocese, and requireth an account of your government thereof. A reformation of all those matters which are amiss in this church, is expected at your hands. And now, lest perhaps, while it is apparent, that so many enormities are committed every where, your lordship should make answer, that you had no notice of them given you, and that these things never came to your knowledge," for this it seems was the bishop's common apology to all complainants, " behold I bring these things to your knowledge this day. Say not then that these crimes have been committed by the fault of others, without your knowledge: for whatever either yourself shall do in person, or suffer through your connivance to be done by others, is wholly your own. Therefore in the presence of God, his angels, and men, I pronounce you to be the author of all these evils: yea, and in that strict day of the general account, I will be a witness to testify against you, that all these things have come to your knowledge by my means: and all these men shall bear witness thereof, who have heard me speak unto you this day."

This freedom alarmed every one. As Mr. Gilpin went out of the church, his friends gathered round him, kindly reproaching him for what he had done.— "The bishop hath now got that advantage over him which he had long sought after—and if he had injured him before without provocation, what would he do now, so greatly exasperated?" Mr. Gilpin walked on, gently keeping them off with his hand, and assuring them, that if his discourse should do the service he intended by it, he was regardless what the consequence might be to himself.

During that day nothing else was talked of. Every one commended what had been said, but was apprehensive for the speaker. Those about the bishop waited in silent expectation, when his resentment would break out.

After dinner, Mr. Gilpin went up to the bishop, to pay his compliments to him, before he went home. "Sir," said the bishop, 'I propose to wait upon you home myself.'—This he accordingly did: and as soon as Mr. Gilpin had carried him into a parlour, the bishop turned suddenly round, and seizing him eagerly by the hand, "Father Gilpin," says he to him, "I acknowledge you are fitter to be the Bishop of Durham than I am to be parson of this church of yours.—I ask forgiveness for past injuries—Forgive me, father.—I know you have enemies; but while I live bishop of Durham, be secure, none of them shall cause you any farther trouble."

SECTION VIII.

Though Mr. Gilpin was chiefly solicitous about the morals of those committed to his care, he omitted not however to promote, as far as he could, their temporal happiness. What wealth he had, was entirely laid out in charity and hospitality.

The value of his living was about four hundred pounds a year: an income which, however considerable at that time, was yet in appearance very unproportionate to the generous things he did; indeed he could not have done them, unless his frugality had been equal to his generosity.

In building a school, and purchasing lands for the maintenance of a master and usher, he expended above five hundred pounds. As there was so great a resort of young people to this school, that in a little time the town was not able to accommodate them, he put himself to the inconvenience of fitting up a part of his own house for that purpose, where he seldom had fewer than twenty or thirty children. Some of these were the sons of persons of distinction, whom he boarded at easy rates: but the greater part were poor children, who could not so easily get them-

selves boarded in the town; and whom he not only educated, but clothed and maintained: he was at the expence likewise of boarding in the town many other poor children. He used to bring several every year from the different parts where he preached, particularly Reads-dale and Tine-dale; which places he was at great pains in civilizing, and contributed not a little towards rooting out that barbarism, which every year prevailed less among them.

For the maintenance of poor scholars at the universities, he yearly set apart sixty pounds. This sum he always laid out, often more. His common allowance to each scholar was about ten pounds a year: which for a sober youth was at that time a very sufficient maintenance: so that he never maintained fewer than six. By his will it appears, that at his death he had nine upon his list; whom he took care to provide for during their stay at the university.

Every Thursday throughout the year, a very large quantity of meat was dressed wholly for the poor; and every day, they had what quantity of broth they wanted. Twenty-four of the poorest were his constant pensioners. Four times in the year, a dinner was provided for them, when they received from his steward a certain quantity of corn, and a sum of money: and at Christmas, they had always an ox divided among them.

Wherever he heard of any in distress, whether of his own parish, or any other, he was sure to relieve them. In his walks abroad, he would frequently bring home with him poor people, and send them away clothed as well as fed.

He took great pains to inform himself of the circumstances of his neighbours, that the modesty of the sufferer might not prevent his relief.

But the money best laid out was, in his opinion, that which encouraged industry. It was one of his greatest pleasures to make up the losses of his labo-

rious neighbours, and prevent their sinking under them. If a poor man had lost a beast, he would send him another in its room: or if any farmer had had a bad year, he would make him an abatement in his tithes. Thus, as far as he was able, he took the misfortunes of his parish upon himself; and like a true shepherd exposed himself for his flock.

But of all kinds of industrious poor, he was most forward to assist those who had large families; such never failed to meet with his bounty, when they wanted to settle their children in the world.

In the distant parishes where he preached, as well as in his own neighbourhood, his generosity and benevolence were continually shewing themselves; particularly in the desolate parts of Northumberland: "When he began his journey," says an old manuscript life of him, "he would have ten pounds in his purse; and at his coming home he would be twenty nobles in debt, which he would always pay within a fortnight after."—In the jails he visited, he was not only careful to give the prisoners proper instructions, but used to purchase for them likewise what necessaries they wanted.

Even upon the public road he never let slip an opportunity of doing good. Often has he been known to take off his cloak, and give it to an half naked traveller: and when he has had scarce money enough in his pocket to provide himself a dinner, yet would he give away part of that little, or the whole, if he found any who seemed to stand in need of it. Of this benevolent temper the following instance is preserved. One day returning home, he saw in a field several people crouding together; and judging that something more than ordinary had happened, he rode up to them, and found that one of the horses in a team had suddenly dropped down, which they were endeavouring to raise; but in vain: for the horse was dead. The owner of it seeming much dejected with his misfortune, and declaring

how grievous a loss it was to him, Mr. Gilpin bade him not be disheartened; "I'll let you have," says he, "honest man, that horse of mine," and pointed to his servant's—"Ah! master," replied the countryman, "my pocket will not reach such a beast as that."—"Come, come," said Mr. Gilpin, "take him, take him; and when I demand my money, then thou shalt pay me."

His hospitable manner of living was the admiration of the whole country. He spent in his family every fortnight, forty bushels of corn, twenty bushels of malt, and a whole ox; besides a proportional quantity of other kinds of provision.

Strangers and travellers found a chearful reception. All were welcome that came; and even their beasts had so much care taken of them, that it was humorously said, "If a horse was turned loose in any part of the country, it would immediately make its way to the rector of Houghton's."

Every Sunday from Michaelmas till Easter, was a sort of a public day with him. During this season, he expected to see all his parishioners and their families. For their reception, he had three tables well covered: the first was for gentlemen, the second for husbandmen and farmers, and the third for day-labourers.—This piece of hospitality he never omitted, even when losses, or a scarcity of provision, made its continuance rather difficult to him. He thought it his duty, and that was a deciding motive. "If you should, as you threaten, (says he in a letter to his old enemy chancellor Barns) give out a sequestration of my benefice, you shall do me a greater favour than you are aware of. For at this time I am run in no small debt. I want likewise provision of victuals. Where I have had, against Michaelmas, six or seven fat oxen, and five or six fat cows, I have now neither cow nor ox, but must seek all from the shambles. A sequestration given out, I may with honesty break up house for a space

which will save me twenty or thirty pounds in my purse. But I trust you will think better of this matter."

"These times, (says he, in another letter) make me so tired of house-keeping, that I would I were discharged from it, if it could be with a clear conscience."

Even when he was absent, no alteration was made in his family-expences: the poor were fed as usual, and his neighbours entertained.

He was always glad of the company of men of worth and letters, who used much to frequent his house. This sociable temper led him into a very large acquaintance; which, as he could not select his company, became very inconvenient to him when he grew old.

I shall close this account of his manner of living with a story, which does no little honour to his house-keeping.

Some affairs in Scotland obliging queen Elizabeth to send thither her treasurer, the lord Burleigh, he resolved to take the opportunity of his return to pay a visit to Mr. Gilpin. Hurried as he was, he could not resist the desire of seeing a man, whose name was every where so respectfully mentioned. His free discourse from the pulpit to king Edward's court, had early recommended him to this noble person; since which time, the great distance between them had wholly interrupted their acquaintance. The treasurer's return was so sudden, that he had not time to give any notice of his intended visit. But the economy of so plentiful a house as Mr. Gilpin's was not easily disconcerted. He received his noble guest with so much true politeness, and treated him and his whole retinue in so affluent and generous a manner, that the treasurer would often afterwards say, "He could hardly have expected more at Lambeth." While lord Burleigh stayed at Houghton, he took great pains by

his own, and the observation of his domestics, to acquaint himself with the order and regularity with which every thing in that house was managed. It contained a very large family; and was besides continually crowded with persons of all kinds, gentlemen, scholars, workmen, farmers, and poor people: yet there was never any confusion; every one was immediately carried into proper apartments, and entertained, directed, or relieved, as his particular business required. It could not but please this wise lord, who was so well acquainted with the effects of order and regularity in the highest sphere, to observe them in this humble one. Here too he saw true simplicity of manners, and every social virtue regulated by exact prudence. The statesman began to unbend, and he could not without an envious eye, compare the unquiet scenes of vice and vanity in which he was engaged, with the calmness of this amiable retreat. At length with reluctance he took his leave; and with all the warmth of affection embracing his much respected friend, he told him, "He had heard great things in his commendation, but he had now seen what far exceeded all that he had heard. If, (added he) Mr. Gilpin, I can ever be of any service to you at court, or elsewhere, use me with all freedom as one you may depend on." When he had mounted Rainton-hill, which rises about a mile from Houghton, and commands the vale, he turned his horse to take one more view of the place: and having kept his eye fixed upon it for some time, his reverie broke out into this exclamation: "There is the enjoyment of life indeed!—who can blame that man for not accepting a bishopric!—what doth he want to make him greater, or happier, or more useful to mankind!"

SECTION IX.

The last business in which Mr. Gilpin engaged, was the settlement of his school. It answered his expectations so well by the good it did in the country, that when he grew old, it became his chief concern. His infirmities obliged him now to relax a little from those very great fatigues he had undergone abroad, and to draw his engagements nearer home. His school, situated near his house, afforded him, when most infirm, an employment; and he thought he could hardly die in peace till he had settled it to his mind. What he had principally at heart, was to compose a set of good statutes, to provide it a better endowment, and to fix all by a charter.

As to the statutes, he was daily employed in correcting, adding to, and altering, those he had drawn up; advising with his friends, and doing all in his power to prevent any future abuse of his charity.

With regard to a better endowment, it was not indeed in his own power to do any thing more. His exhibitions, his other charities, and his generous manner of living, made yearly such large demands upon him, which increased as he grew old, that it became then impossible for him to lay up any thing. He would gladly have contracted his hospitality, which he thought his least useful expence; but when he considered, that he might probably by that means lose much of the esteem of the people, he could not prevail with himself to do it. Thus unable to do any thing more from his own purse, he turned his eyes upon his friends.

There was a gentleman in his neighbourhood, John Heath, Esquire, of Kepeir, with whom Mr.

Gilpin had lived for many years in great intimacy. He was a man of uncommon worth, was master of a plentiful fortune, and had an inclination to put it to the best uses. He was besides a man of letters, and an encourager of learning. To this gentleman Mr. Gilpin applied in favour of his school: Mr. Heath came with great readiness into the scheme proposed to him, and doubled the original endowment. Mr. Gilpin prevailed upon some others likewise to contribute their assistance, so that the revenues of the school became at length answerable to his wishes.

Having thus obtained a sufficient endowment, he began next to think of a charter. For this he applied to his friend the earl of Bedford; from whom are preserved the two following letters on that subject.

“ To my very loving friend Mr. Bernard Gilpin.

“ After my hearty commendations: I have received your letter of the 11th of last month; and besides the good news of your health, am glad also to hear of your well-doing in those parts, which want such men as you to call the rude sort to the knowledge and continuance of their duties towards God, and their prince; whereof there is great lack.—Concerning your suit moved at Windsor, the troubles that have since happened have been so many and so great, that no convenient time hath served to prosecute the same; and the bill given in, I doubt, is lost. So that for more surety, it were good you sent up another copy: and I will do my best endeavours to bring it to pass. I will likewise do what I can to get some of those county forfeitures to be granted by her majesty, for the furtherance of your good purpose—Here is no news to write to you: as for things in the north, you have them there: and albeit it hath been said, that a peace is concluded in France, yet it is not so.—And

so wishing your health and well to do, I do hereby thank you for your gentle letter, and so commit you to God.

“Your assured friend,

“F. BEDFORD.”

“*London, May 3, 1570.*”

“After my very hearty commendations: hoping in God you are in good health, who as he hath well begun in you, so may he keep and continue you a good member in his church.—I have moved the queen’s majesty for your school; and afterwards the bill was delivered to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, a very good, and godly gentleman, who procured the same to be signed, as I think you have before this heard by your brother. Assuredly you did very well and honestly therein, and have deserved great commendations: a thing most necessary in those parts is this of all other, for the well-bringing up of youth, and training them in learning, and goodness.—In any thing that I may stand you in stead, I pray you be bold to use me, whom you may assure yourself to remain ready to do you any good that I can:—So for this time I commend you to God.

“Your assured friend,

“F. BEDFORD.”

“*Russel-place, March 26, 1571.*”

One of Mr. Gilpin’s last good actions, was his endeavour to convert a young jesuit. A friend of his, Mr. Genison of Newcastle, had taken into his house a brother’s son, who having been some time in Italy, and there inveigled by the jesuits, who were then growing into repute, had been taken into their order. His time of discipline being over, he was sent into England, whither he brought with him the zeal of a novice. His uncle, a man of plain

good sense, being greatly afflicted that his nephew was not only become a papist, but a jesuit, said what he could to recover him from his errors. But the young man had his distinctions too ready to be influenced by his uncle's arguments. The old gentleman therefore not knowing what to do with himself, at length thought of Mr. Gilpin. To him he wrote, and earnestly intreated him, if he had any friendship for him, to try what impression he could make upon his nephew. Mr. Gilpin had little hopes of success from what he had heard of the young man's character; and still less when he saw him. He was naturally very full of himself, and this turn his education had increased. Instead of examining attentively what was said, and giving pertinent answers, he was still running from the point, advancing his own tenets, and defending them by strained interpretations of Scripture, and the grossest misapplication of it. The truth was, he wanted to signalize himself by making some eminent convert; and his vanity led him to expect, that he might bring over Mr. Gilpin. This was indeed his chief purpose in coming to Houghton. When he failed in this, he did what he could to corrupt the servants, and such of the scholars and country people as came in his way. He became at length so very disagreeable, that Mr. Gilpin was obliged to desire his uncle to send for him again. His letter upon the occasion discovers so much honesty of heart, and so beautiful a simplicity of manners, that it deserves very well to be inserted.

“ I trust, sir, you remember that when you first spake to me about your brother's son, your promise was, that I should have a licence from the bishop, for my warrant. But that is not done. Wherefore you must either get one yourself, or suffer me. For our curate and churchwardens are sworn to present, if any be in the parish, which utterly refuse to come to church. I only desired him that he

would come into the quire in the sermon-time, but half an hour; which he utterly refused, and willed me to speak no more of it. He is indeed fixed in his errors; and I have perceived by his talk, that his coming here was not to learn, but to teach: for thinking to find me half a papist, he trusted to win me over entirely. But whereas, I trust in God, I have put him clearly from that hope; yet I stand in great danger, that he shall do much hurt in my house, or in the parish; for he cometh furnished with all the learning of the hot college of jesuits. They have found out, I perceive, certain expositions of the Old Testament, never heard of before, to prove the invocation of saints from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will not grant that any thing hath been wrong in the church of Rome; the most abominable errors of indulgences, pardons, false miracles, and false reliques, pilgrimages, and such like, he can find them all in the Gospel; and will have them all to be good and holy.—For my part, I have determined myself otherwise: age and want of memory compel me to take my leave of this wretched world; and at this time of life not to study answers to such trumpery, and new inventions; seeing I was never any disputer in all my life. I trust there be learned men enough in the universities, who will sufficiently answer all that ever they can bring that is worth answering.—Wherefore, good Mr. Genison, seeing your cousin is fixed in his errors, as he plainly confesseth, help to ease me of this burthen, that I may with quietness apply to my vocation. I am sent for to preach in divers places, but I cannot go from home, so long as he is here. People in these evil days are given to learn more superstition in a week, than true religion in seven years.—But if notwithstanding you are desirous to have him tarry two or three weeks longer, I must needs have licence from the bishop: whether you will get the same, or I must.

I refer to your good pleasure.—And so I pray God to preserve you evermore. Your loving friend to his power.

BERNARD GILPIN.”

Notwithstanding what is said in this letter, it seems probable, that Mr. Gilpin's arguments at length made some impression upon the young man: for he entered afterwards into a serious dispute in writing with him; which he would scarce have engaged in, unless the jesuit had shewn greater willingness to discover truth, than what had yet appeared.

“As sickness, sores, and other troubles,” says Mr. Gilpin to him in a letter, “would suffer me, I have answered your objections out of St. Austin: and the chief of them, I trust, are answered to the contentation of such as are willing to stay their conscience upon God and his word, and not upon man's vain inventions, wherein they shall find no rest of conscience, nor quietness of mind.—When leisure will serve to finish the residue, I will send them unto you. In the mean time I pray God to illuminate your eyes with his heavenly light, and to guide your feet into the way of peace.”

In the latter part of his life, Mr. Gilpin went through his duty with great difficulty. His health was much impaired. The extreme fatigue he had undergone during so many years, had now quite broke his constitution. Thus he complains in a letter to a friend: “To sustain all these travels and troubles, I have a very weak body, subject to many diseases: by the monitions whereof, I am daily warned to remember death. My greatest grief of all is, that my memory is quite decayed: my sight faileth; my hearing faileth; with other ailments, more than I can well express.”

While he was thus struggling with an advanced age, and impaired constitution, he met with an accident which entirely destroyed his health, As he was

crossing the market place at Durham, an ox ran at him, and pushed him down with such violence, that it was imagined the bruises he received would have occasioned his death. He lay long confined; and though he again got abroad, he never recovered even the little strength he had before, and continued lame as long as he lived. But accidents of this kind were no very formidable trials to a mind so well tempered as his. It was a persuasion he had long entertained, that misfortunes are intended by providence to remind us of our neglected duty: and thus he always used them, making self-examination the constant attendant upon whatever calamities befel him. To this it was owing that he was never dejected by misfortunes; but received them rather with thankfulness than repining.

But sickness was not the only distress which the declining years of this excellent man had to struggle with. As age and infirmity began to lessen that weight and influence he once had, the malice and opposition of his enemies of course prevailed more.

Of what frivolous pretences they availed themselves, and with what temper he bore their malice, the following letters will shew better than any narrative.

“I am very sorry, Mr. Wren, to hear that you should fall into such unlawful contention with any one; and that, to maintain an evil cause, you should make an untrue report of me. I am very glad however, that the two other false reports, if it be as you say, were not raised by you: one, that I should make the marriage of ministers unlawful; the other, that I should make their children bastards. Whereas certainly it is known, that long ago I was accused before bishop Tunstal for speaking in favour of priests’ marriage: since which time I have never altered my mind; but in my sermons in this country, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Cumberland Yorkshire, and Lancashire, I have, as opportunity served,

spoken in defence of priests' marriage. And allowing their marriage. I trust no man will believe that I should make their children bastards.

"You say I am called hypocrite; I know I am so of divers. How they will answer God's law therein, I leave to their own conscience. But verily for my own part I can thank them; for when I hear it, I trust in God, I gain not a little thereby in studying clearly to subdue that vice; which I have strived against ever since I studied the Holy Scriptures. And I suppose very few or no preachers in England have preached oftener against that vice than I; and that, as I trust, with a clear conscience.

"But to make an end at this time (because this bearer can shew you what small time I have, being sore overcharged with manifold studies and businesses) it is time, good Mr. Wren, both for you and me (age and sundry diseases, messengers of death, giving us warning) more deeply to ripe our own consciences, and more diligently to search our own faults, and to leave off from curious hearkening and espying of other men's: especially when it breedeth contention, and can in no wise edify, I pray you read St. James, the latter part of the third chapter, and there learn from whence cometh contentious wisdom. And this, I beseech you, remember, that it is not long since God did most mercifully visit you with great sickness. At that time I doubt not but you lamented sore your duty forgotten in your life past; and for the time to come, if God would restore you to your health, I trust you promised a godly repentance, and reformation of life. Good Mr. Wren, if you have somewhat forgotten that godly mind, pray to God to bring it again; and being had, keep it. Pray in faith, and St. James saith, God will hear you; whom I beseech evermore to have you in his blessed keeping.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

“After my most hearty and due commendations; having heard that Sir William Mitchell, one of your brother’s executors, reported evil of me in sundry places, bruiting abroad, that I withhold from him great sums of money; and I know nothing wherefore, but for sixteen books which I had of your brother, being to return either the price or the books again; I heartily beseech you, seeing that you are joined executor likewise, that you will let me know by this bearer, William Ayray, if you can find any thing in any writings or accounts of your brother, that can be lawfully demanded of me; and, God willing, it shall be paid or I be much older. If, as I believe, I be debtor for nothing else, saving the sixteen books, whereof I know no price, I have given this bearer, my servant, such instructions, that he will either satisfy you, or I will make return of the books.—I pray Almighty God to have you ever in his blessed keeping. Your loving friend to his power.

BERNARD GILPIN.”

But of all his enemies, the most active were Hugh Broughton, and chancellor Barns.

Broughton acted the basest and most ungrateful part. Mr. Gilpin had educated and maintained him both at school and at the university, and had always shewn him every civility in his power. Yet this man was afterwards vile enough to endeavour to supplant the very patron who raised him. He had craftily insinuated himself into the bishop of Durham’s favour, and thought he stood fair for the first vacant preferment; and as Houghton was then the best thing in the bishop’s gift, he had fixed his eye upon it. Mr. Gilpin was old and infirm, and in all probability, could enjoy it but a very few years, yet Broughton had not patience to let him spend the remainder of his age in peace. He knew the bishop was easily imposed on, and found means to prejudice

him against Mr. Gilpin. To this was owing, as appeared afterwards, the affair of the suspension already mentioned, and some other instances of the bishop's displeasure. But in the end, poor Broughton had the mortification to see his indirect measures unravelled. The bishop saw his error, was reconciled to Mr. Gilpin, and continued ever afterwards his steady friend: and Broughton finding himself neglected, left Durham to seek his fortune elsewhere.

Chancellor Barns was indeed a more generous, as he was a more open enemy. Besides, what he did, was in some measure in his own defence; for it must be owned Mr. Gilpin was very troublesome to him in all his designs*, and generally made the first attack. After the affair at Chester however, the chancellor laid aside all decency; and from that time, nothing in his power that was disobliging was omitted. But his malice had no other effect, than to give Mr. Gilpin an opportunity of proving how well he had learned the Christian lessons of meekness: though at the same time how becomingly he could exert a decent spirit, when it was needful; and shew, by tempering charity with his displeasure, that he could be angry and yet not sin. To this happy temper the following letters bear testimony.

“Right worshipful, after my due commendations; these are to certify you, that my curate paying for me at the last visitation forty-six shillings, paid more than he ought to have done by about a noble. As for the money I speak not: I pray God that it may do my lord much good. But I should be very sorry, that through my default it should remain an everlasting burthen to my successors. Wherefore I beseech you let it not be made a precedent; and for my time, if I live till the next visitation, which I look not for, I will not refuse to pay it no more than I do now, so that care be taken my successors pay no more after me than that which is due, which

* See Section VII.

I take to be fourpence for every pound in the queen's majesty's books.—But you say I must needs pay it, and my successors also, because it is found in a certain rate book of bishop Pilkington. As for that I am able to say, and I trust I can bring witness, that bishop Pilkington at his first visitation, clearly forgave me all the sum, in consideration, —as I was told, of my travel in Northumberland; and after that, at his other two visitations, I made no let, but suffered his officers just to take what they would. But my trust is, that your worship will not burthen my successors for this my simplicity or folly, term it which you will.—Seeing then that I have so much reason, they do me wrong who say I wrangled at the last visitation: for God is my witness, I love not differences of any kind.—I pray God to have you in his blessed keeping.

“Yours to his power,

“BERNARD GILPIN.”

“I marvel, Mr. Barns, that you should use me in this manner, I seeking and studying to use you well in all things.—About two or three years ago, at my lord's visitation, when you took of others a groat in the pound (as you can take no more) you made me pay above my due; for the which, if I had sought remedy by the statute against extortion, I trust the statute would have stood for me.—After that, the subsidy being gathered, my servant, by oversight, not examining carefully the book, paid a certain sum that was not due, I think it was about twenty shillings; but sure I could never get it restored to this day.—Now you seek unjustly to charge my living for my curate; which seeing it hath never been demanded before, some will think you seek it for your own purse. I pay unto the queen's majesty (God save her grace) as duly, and with as good a will as any subject, twenty-three pounds, twelve shillings, by the year. But if you still continue resolved to

charge me with this six pounds, I promise you, before I pay it, I will spend five marks in defence of my right.—But I trust after good advertisement you will let this new suit drop. I pray God Almighty to keep you evermore.

“ Your loving friend to his power,

“ BERNARD GILPIN.”

This load of calumny, ingratitude, and ill-usage, may justly be supposed heavy upon him, already sinking under a weight of years: yet he bore it with great fortitude; strengthening himself with such consolations, as a good Christian hath in reserve for all extremities.

His resignation was not long exercised. About the beginning of February, in the year 1583, he found himself so very weak, that he was sensible his end must be drawing near. He told his friends his apprehensions; and spoke of his death with that happy composure which always attends the conclusion of a good life. He was soon after confined to his chamber. His senses continued perfect to the last. Of the manner of his taking leave of the world, we have this account.

A few days before his death, he ordered himself to be raised in his bed; and sending for several poor people, who had been his pensioners, he told them, he found he was going out of the world—he hoped they would be his witnesses at the great day that he had endeavoured to do his duty among them—and he prayed God to remember them after he was gone—he would not have them weep for him: if ever he had told them any thing good, he would have them remember that in his stead.—Above all things, he exhorted them to fear God, and keep his commandments; telling them, if they would do this, they could never be left comfortless.

He next ordered his scholars to be called in: to

these likewise he made a short speech, reminding them, that this was their time, if they had any desire to qualify themselves for being of use in the world—that learning was well worth their attention, but virtue was much more so.

He next exhorted his servants; and then sent for several persons, who had not heretofore profited by his advice, as he had wished; and upon whom he imagined his dying words might have a better effect. His speech began to falter before he finished his exhortations. The remaining hours of his life, he spent in prayer, and broken conversation with some select friends, mentioning often the consolations of Christianity—and declaring that nothing else could bring a man peace at the last. He died on the fourth of March, 1583, in the 66th year of his age.

I shall conclude this account of him with a few observations upon his character; and some incidents, which could not properly be introduced in any part of the narration.

His person was tall and slender, in the ornament of which he was at no pains. He had a particular aversion to the fopperies of dress.—In his diet he was very temperate, rather abstemious.

His parts were very good. His imagination, memory, and judgment, were lively, retentive and solid.

His acquirements were as considerable. By an unwearied application he had amassed a great store of knowledge; and was ignorant of no part of learning at that time in esteem: in languages, history, and divinity he particularly excelled. He read poetry with a good taste; himself, as the bishop of Chichester relates, no mean poet. But he laid out little time in the pursuit of any study foreign to his profession.

His temper was naturally warm; and in his youth we meet with instances of his giving way to passion;

but he soon got more command of himself, and at length entirely corrected that infirmity.

His disposition was serious, yet among his particular friends he was commonly cheerful, sometimes facetious. His general behaviour was very affable. His severity had no object but himself; to others he was humble candid and indulgent. Never did virtue sit with greater ease on any one, had less of moroseness, or could mix more agreeably with whatever was innocent in common life.

He had a most extraordinary skill in the art of managing a fortune. He considered himself merely as a steward for other people; and took care therefore that his own desires never exceeded what calm reason could justify. Extravagance with him was another word for injustice. Amidst all his business he found leisure to look into his affairs; well knowing that frugality is the support of charity.

His intimacies were few. Yet where he professed a particular friendship, he was a religious observer of its offices. Of this the following relation is an instance. Through his application the dean and chapter of Durham had bestowed a living upon one of his friends. Soon after Mr. Gilpin was nominated a referee in a dispute between them and the archbishop of York: but for some particular reasons he excused himself*. This irritated the dean and chapter so much, that out of mere pique at him they

* The chapter of Durham was in great disorder, and in many instances much complained of. Sandys, archbishop of York, undertook to visit them: but Wittingham, the dean withstood him; having prevailed upon the lord president of the north to second him. The archbishop complained to the council; upon which a commission was issued out by the lord keeper, empowering certain persons to examine the case; among whom Mr. Gilpin was named. His reason for not acting was, most probably, because he thought the dean and chapter in the wrong.

took away two thirds from the allowance they had assigned to his friend. He did what he could to pacify them; but his utmost endeavours proving fruitless, he insisted upon his friend's accepting from him a yearly satisfaction for his loss*.

At another time a friend desired he would request the bishop of Durham to lend him a sum of money; he made the application; but not succeeding, he wrote thus to his friend: "My lord hath lent to so very many, (which I believe is true) that you must

* "To Dr. Wilson.

"Right worshipful, whereas I hear your worship named of many to the Deanery of Durham, these are most humbly to beseech you (if it shall please God so to bless that house) that you will help, as I trust God you may, to redress, among sundry enormities, one which hath happened a year ago or more.—The dean and chapter of Durham are parsons of a parish in Northumberland, called Ellingham. The living was better than thirty pounds a year. Our school-master of Houghton, a scholar of Oxford, made labour for it. At his suit, and mine together, it was granted; as we judged, with all such commodities as the last incumbent, and others before had had. But soon after, the dean and chapter took away from the vicar as good as twenty pounds a year; so that the poor man, having wife and children, might have begged, if I and other friends had not holpen him: God knoweth it hath been a costly matter to me. But my trust now is, that your worship, knowing the matter, will be willing to help it, and may help it; for the present possessor, Mr. Selby, hath nothing to shew but a promise from Mr. Whittingham, whereunto the chapter would never consent. Mr. Ralph Lever can inform you of all the matter. If your worship can help it, surely you cannot do a better deed. Would to God all violent workers of injuries were resisted! If God should send you into this country, I trust to be better known to your worship. I pray God preserve you evermore. By your's to his power.

Houghton,
July 11, 1579.

BERNARD GILPIN."

pardon him for not sending you the money. I pray you trouble him no more; and I trust by little and little I can make up the sum myself."

He was the most candid interpreter of the words and actions of others: where he plainly saw failings, he would make every possible allowance for them. He used to express a particular indignation at slander; often saying, it deserved the gallows more than theft. For himself, he was remarkably guarded when he spoke of others: he considered common fame as the falsest medium, and a man's reputation as his most valuable property.

His sincerity was such as became his other virtues. He had the strictest regard to truth, of which his whole life was only one instance. All little arts and sinister practices, those ingredients of worldly prudence, he disdained. His perseverance in so commendable a part, in whatever difficulties it might at first involve him, in the end raised his character above malice and envy, and gave him that weight and influence in every thing he undertook, which nothing but an approved integrity can give.

Whatever his other virtues were, their lustre was greatly increased by his humility. To conquer religious pride is one of the best effects of religion; an effect which his religion, in the most amiable manner produced.

But the most distinguished parts of the character of this amiable man were his conscientious discharge of the duties of a clergyman, his extensive benevolence, and his exalted piety.

As to the discharge of his function, no man could be more strongly influenced by what he thought the duties of it. The motives of convenience, or present interest had no kind of weight with him. As the income was no part of his concern, he only considered the office; which he thought such a charge as a man would rather dread than solicit: but when providence called him to it (for what was not pro-

cured by any endeavours of his own, he could not but ascribe to providence) he accepted it, though with reluctance. He then shewed, that if a sense of the importance of his office made him distrust his abilities, it made him more diligent in exerting them. When he undertook the care of a parish, it immediately engrossed his whole attention. The pleasures of life he totally relinquished; in a great degree even his favourite pursuits of learning. This was the more commendable in him, as he had always a strong inclination for retirement, and was often violently tempted to shut himself up in some university at home or abroad, and live there sequestered from the world. But his conscience corrected his inclination; as he thought the life of a mere recluse by no means agreeable to the active principles of Christianity. Nay, the very repose to which his age laid claim, he would not indulge; but, as long as he had strength sufficient, persevered in the laborious practice of such methods of instruction, as he imagined would most benefit those under his care.—Of popular applause he was regardless, so far as mere reputation was concerned: but as the favour of the multitude was one step towards gaining their attention, in that light he valued it. He reprov'd vice, wherever he observed it, with the utmost freedom. As he was contented in his station, and superior to all dependence, he avoided the danger of being tempted to an unbecoming compliance: and whether he reprov'd in public or in private, his unblameable life, and the seriousness with which he spoke, gave an irresistible weight to what he said. He studied the low capacities of the people among whom he lived, and knew how to adapt his arguments to their apprehensions. Hence the effects that his preaching had upon them are said to have been often very surprising. In particular it is related, that as he was once recommending honesty in a part of the country notoriously addicted to

thieving, a man struck with the warmth and earnestness with which he spoke, stood up in the midst of a large congregation, and freely confessed his dishonesty, and how heartily he repented of it.

With regard to his benevolence, no man certainly had ever more disinterested views, or made the common good more the study of his life; which was indeed the best comment upon the great Christian principle of universal charity. He called nothing his own; there was nothing he could not readily part with for the service of others. In his charitable distributions he had no measure but the bounds of his income, of which the least portion was always laid out on himself. Nor did he give as if he was granting a favour, but as if he was paying a debt: all obsequious service the generosity of his heart disdained. He was the more particularly careful to give away in his lifetime whatever he could save for the poor, as he had often seen and regretted the abuse of posthumous charities. "It is my design at my departure, (says he, writing to a friend) to leave no more behind me, but to bury me, and pay my debts." What little he did leave*, (which was little)

* The following are a few extracts from his will, which perhaps may not be unacceptable to the reader.

"First, I bequeath and commend my soul unto the hands of Almighty God, my creator; not trusting in mine own merits, which am of myself a most wretched sinner, but only in the mercy of God, and in the merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer and my Saviour.—My body I commit to be buried in the parish-church or church-yard, wheresoever it shall please God to call me to his mercy.—For the disposition of my goods, first, I will that all my debts be truly paid with all speed; which I shall gather, and set after this my last will.—My debts once discharged, of what remaineth I give and bequeath*** (here follow legacies to the poor of nine parishes)—Likewise I give to the poor of Houghton parish the great new ark for corn, to provide them groats in winter; and if none will

beside his stock, and household furniture, and the arrears of his tythes, he left wholly to the poor, de-

make that provision, let it be sold, and the price dealt among them.—Likewise, I give to the Queen's college, in Oxford, all such books as shall have written upon the first leaf, Bernardus Gilpin Reginensi collegio, D.D. and all such books as shall have written upon the first leaf Johannes Newton Reginensi collegio, D. D. and likewise all the books that Mr. Hugh Broughton hath of mine, viz. Eusebius, Greek, in two volumes; and Josephus, Greek, in one volume, and certain other books; I trust he will withhold none of them.—Also I give to Keipier school in Houghton, all such books as shall have the name of it in the first leaf.—Also I give to my successor, and to his successors after him, first, the great new brewing lead in the brewhouse, with the guile-fat, and mash-fat; likewise in the kiln a large new steep-lead, which receives a chaldron of corn at once; likewise in the larder-house one great salting-tub, which will hold four oxen or more: likewise in the great chamber over the parlour one long table, and a shorter, standing upon joined frames; likewise in the parlour one long table upon a joined frame, with the form; likewise in the hall three tables standing fast, with their forms to them: likewise * * * [here follow a great many other pieces of furniture, materials for building, unwrought timber, lime, slate, &c.] In consideration of all these, and of my exceeding great charges in building and reparations since my first coming to this parsonage, which I think with a safe conscience I may well say amounteth to 300 pounds, if I say no more. I trust my successor will not demand any thing for dilapidations: and if he should, I doubt nothing but that the bishop of Durham will persuade him to be content with reason, and to do all things with charity: and if charity may bear rule, I doubt not but all dilapidations will fall.—And here I most earnestly desire my successor not only to let all dilapidations fall, upon these considerations, and also in favour of the poor, upon whom chiefly my goods are bestowed in this testament: but also that he will be a continual defender and maintainer of Keipier-

ducting a few slight tokens of remembrance that he bequeathed to his friends.

school in Houghton, both in seeing the statutes well kept, and the children brought up in virtue and learning; which if he do, I doubt not but God shall prosper him the better in all things he taketh in hand.—Moreover I give to the poor of Houghton, twenty pounds and nine of my oxen: the other nine I bequeath to my three executors:—likewise I give to the right reverend Richard, lord bishop of Durham, for a simple token of remembrance, three silver spoons with acorns; the history of Paulus Jovius; and the works of Calvin;—also I give unto John Heath, esquire, for a like remembrance, other two silver spoons with acorns of the same weight; and also the history of John Sleden in Latin—to Mrs. Heath I give my English chronicle of Fabian: also I give to Richard Bellasis, esquire, for a like remembrance, other two silver spoons with acorns of the same fashion; and also my history called *Novus Orbis*.—And I most humbly beseech these three men of honour and worship, that for God's cause they will take so much pains as to become supervisors of this my last will and testament, which being a work of Christian charity, I trust verily they will not refuse. And above all other things I most humbly beseech them to take into their tuition and governance all the lands and revenues belonging to Keipier school, and all deeds, evidences, gifts, and other writings, which are to shew for the same. All the right and title to these lands I give up wholly into their power, for the good maintenance of the said school.—And for as much as these lands are not so surely established as I could wish, I give unto Keipier school twenty pounds, which I desire the bishop of Durham to take into his hands, and to bestow as he shall see fit, upon men learned in the laws.—All the rest of my goods and chattels, I will that they be divided into two equal parts, and the one of them to be given to the poor of Houghton, the other to scholars and students in Oxford, whose names are Ric. Wharton, Ste. Coperthwait, Geo. Carleton, Ralph Ironside, Ewan Eyray, Will. Cayrns, Hen. Ayray, Fr. Reisely, and Tho Collisen.

Such instances of benevolence gained him the title of the father of the poor; and made his memory revered long afterwards in the country where he lived*.

But no part of his character was more conspicuous than his piety. It hath been largely shewn with what temper, sincerity, and earnestness, he examined the controverted points of religion, and settled his own opinions. He thought religion his principal concern; and of course made the attain-

These I will be relieved as mine executors shall see needful, a year, two, or three, as the sum will arise,—And for my three executors, for as much as I have been beneficial to them in my life time, so far as a good conscience would permit me, and sometime further (but God I trust hath forgiven me) I will, and I doubt not but they will agree to the same, that they be content with the nine oxen. And if any gains do arise from the sale of my goods, as I think I have prized them under the worth, I will they shall have that amongst them; only I earnestly request and desire them to be good to my poor neighbours of the parish, being desirous to buy such things as they stand most in need of."

* A monument in the chancel of Houghton church is a remarkable instance of this.—It is erected to the memory of Mr. Davenport, a worthy rector of that parish; whom his encomiast thus celebrates.

"If the soul's transmigration were believ'd,
You'd say, good Gilpin's soul he had received,
And with as liberal hand did give or more,
His daily charity unto the poor:
For which with him, we doubt not, he's possess'd
Of righteous men's reward, eternal rest."

Whatever becomes of the notion of the soul's transmigration, one would imagine however that Mr. Gilpin's example at least had its influence upon the rectors of Houghton; for perhaps few parishes in England can boast such a succession of worthy pastors, as that parish can, since Mr. Gilpin's death.

ment of it his principal study: he knew no other end of religion but an holy life; and therefore in all his enquiries about it, he considered himself as looking after truths which were to influence his future conduct, and make him a better man. Accordingly, when his religious persuasion was once settled, he made the doctrines he embraced the invariable rule of his life: all his moral virtues became Christian; were formed upon such motives, and respected such ends as Christianity recommended. It was his daily care to conform himself to the will of God; upon whose providence he absolutely depended in all conditions of life; resigned, easy, and cheerful under whatsoever misfortunes he might meet with. He had some peculiar, though, it may be, just notions with regard to a particular providence. He thought all misfortunes, which our own indiscretions did not immediately draw upon us, were sent directly from God, to bring us to a sense of our misbehaviour, and quicken us in a virtuous course; accordingly at such times he used with more than ordinary attention to examine his past conduct, and endeavour to find out in what point of duty he had been defective.

To the opinions of others, however different from his own, he was most indulgent. He thought moderation one of the most genuine effects of true piety. It hath already appeared from his intercourse with the dissenters, how great an enemy he was to all intolerant principles; how wrong he thought it on one hand to oppose an established church, and on the other to molest a quiet separatist.

His life was wholly guided by a conscience the most religiously scrupulous. I cannot forbear inserting an instance of its extreme sensibility, though it may be thought perhaps rather to carry a degree of weakness with it. He had behaved in some particular, with regard to his parish, in a manner which gave him great concern. His conscience was so

much alarmed at what he had done, that nothing he was able to allege to himself in his excuse was able to make him easy. At length he determined to lay open the whole case to the bishop of Durham, his diocesan, and to surrender up his living, or submit to any censure, which the bishop might think his fault deserved. Without thus bringing himself to justice, he said, he never could have recovered his peace of mind *.

* His letter upon this occasion to the bishop is not extant, nor doth it appear what the fault was: the following letter relates to it.

“ Grace and peace in Jesus Christ : if any man be vexed in body or mind, you know it is a very grievous thing to have no comforter; which hath constrained me to disclose unto you (not doubting but to have both your comfort and help, and to have it kept most secret) that thing, which, besides to you, I never opened to any living creature. In this inclosed letter I have opened my grief and weakness of conscience unto my lord; beseeching you, if opportunity will serve, to deliver it. Howbeit, if either he should be pained with sickness, or you would first by writing that I should have your advice, or you see any other cause why to stay the delivery, I refer all to your wisdom. But if you have opportunity to my lord, I hope by you to know speedily some part of his pleasure. I trust, my case weighed, he will rather think me to be pitied, than had in hatred. How tender a thing conscience is, I have found by too good experience. I have found moreover, that as it is easily wounded, so it is with difficulty healed. And for my own part, I speak from my heart, I would rather be often wounded in my body, than once in my mind. Which things considered, I trust you will bear with my weakness. But you may object, I have continued weak very long; which fault certainly I find with myself: but for this I accuse my own slowness both in study and prayer; which by God’s grace, as far as my weak body will serve, hereafter shall be amended: for certainly those two are the chief instruments, whereby I have sure trust that God of his goodness will make me strong.”

Such was the life and character of this excellent man. A conduct so agreeable to the strictest rules of religion, gained him among his contemporaries the title of the Northern Apostle. And indeed the parallel was striking; his quitting corrupt doctrines, in the utmost reverence of which he had been educated; the persecutions he met with for the sake of his integrity; the danger he often ran of martyrdom; his contempt of the world; his unwearied application to the business of his calling; the extensive field, in which his labours were employed; and the boldness and freedom with which he reproved the guilty, whatever their fortunes or stations were, might justly characterize him a truly apostolical person.

Viewed with such a life, how mean and contemptible do the idle amusements of the world appear! How trifling that uninterrupted succession of serious folly which engages so great a part of mankind; while each real concern of life is crowded into so small a compass. How much more nobly doth that person act, who can separate appearances from realities; and maintain with firmness each worthy resolution that he forms; persevering steadily like this excellent man, in the conscientious discharge of the duties of that station, whatever that station is, in which providence hath placed him!

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED IN

THE COURT AT GREENWICH,

BEFORE

KING EDWARD VI.

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY, M.D.LII.



BY BERNARD GILPIN, B.D.

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THE following sermon is the only revised composition of Mr. Gilpin's that survived him ; for which reason I thought it right to give it to the reader. It was thought in king Edward's time a very pathetic strain of eloquence ; and well adapted to the irregularities which prevailed in the licentious court of that prince. It hath since been taken notice of by most of the writers who treat of the ecclesiastical affairs of those times, and is mentioned by them as a remarkable instance of that commendable zeal, and noble freedom, which the illustrious reformers of our church then exerted in the cause of virtue and religion.—But I will leave it to recommend itself.

A

SERMON, &c.

ST. LUKE ii. 41—50.]

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year, at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, and they were come up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast, and had finished the days thereof; as they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and Joseph knew not of it, nor his mother. But they, supposing that he had been in the company, went a day's journey; and sought him amongst their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found him not, they turned back to Jerusalem, and sought him. And it came to pass, three days after, that they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors; both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. So when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee with heavy hearts. Then he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Know ye not that I must go about my father's business? But they understood not the word that he spake unto them.

FORASMUCH as the whole Gospel is more full of matter, and plenteous in mysteries, than that it can well be discussed within the limits of one sermon,

I have taken, for this time, to treat upon this one sentence spoken by Christ unto his parents, "Know ye not that I must go about my father's business?" being content to omit the rest; taking only so much as shall suffice to declare the occasion whereupon he spake these words, for the fuller understanding of the same.

Ye shall therefore understand, that when our Saviour was come to the age of twelve years, giving attendance upon his parents to Jerusalem, at the solemn feast of Easter, whither they yearly did repair at that time of sincere devotion, and for the obedience of the law; after that Joseph and Mary had devoutly passed the days of the feast, and were returned home, it came to pass, (not through blind fortune, but by God's providence, that his glory might appear) that the blessed son Jesus tarried behind at Jerusalem; and while his parents, either not taking good heed of him, or else going apart insundry companies, either of them trusting he had been with the other, they went one day's journey before they missed him: but after he was found wanting, they sought him diligently among their kinsfolk and acquaintance, but found him not; which was undoubtedly unto them a very cross of bitter affliction. So doth God many times exercise his elect and chosen with adversity, for their trial, and to keep them in humility. When they were returned to Jerusalem, and had long sought him with sorrowful hearts, after three days they found him in the temple.

Here then, by the way, methinks the Holy Ghost teacheth us this spiritual doctrine: so long as we seek Christ in our own kinsfolk, that is, our own inventions and devices, we find him not; but to find Christ, we must accompany these godly persons, Joseph and Mary, unto the temple of his holy word; there Christ is found unto so many as seek him, with such humble spirits and meek hearts as

Joseph and Mary did. They found him in the temple, not idly occupied as many are, not mumbling things he understood not, sine mente sonum, a confusd sound without knowledge; but they found him occupied in his heavenly father's business, as all men should be in the temple, either in speaking to God by humble and hearty prayer, or hearing God speaking to them in his most blessed word. So was Christ occupied amongst learned men, and opposing them.—Where he teacheth us, to be always as glad to learn as to teach. It is a probable conjecture, that he opened to them the Scriptures which spake of Messias, a matter then in controversy. But whatsoever their matter was, the evangelist saith, “he made them all astonished at his understanding and answers.” So the glory of his godhead even then began to shine. Where we may mark the wonderful power of the Gospel: even the hard-hearted that will not receive it, the bright beams of the truth, shining therein maketh astonished. It causeth also the godly to marvel, as Mary and Joseph; but their admiration always ended with joy.

Yet notwithstanding his heavenly majesty made all men to wonder, his mother thought she had some cause to expostulate with him for the great fear he had brought upon them, casting them into a dungeon of sorrows; and complaining, said, “Son, why hast thou, &c.” She seemed to charge him with the breach of the first precept of the second table, that he had not well entreated his parents. But Christ so shaped his answer, that he taketh away all her complaint; teaching us, how the precepts of the second table may not be understood in any wise to be a hindrance to the first. “Wist ye not that I must go about my father's business?” Where our duty and service to God cometh in place, all human service and obedience, which might be a hindrance thereto, to whomsoever it be, father or mother, king or Cæsar, must stand back and give place. Besides

this, he teacheth us here a most necessary lesson for all men to know and bear away, which is, that his whole life and death was nothing else but a perfect obedience to the will of his heavenly father, and that he was always most busily occupied therein: and teacheth us, that if we look by adoption to be brethren and coheirs with Christ of his father's kingdom, we must also with our master and lord yield up ourselves wholly to our heavenly father's will, and always be occupied in his business. "I have given you an example, that ye should do even as I have done to you." Which lesson being so necessary of all Christians to be kept, and the breach thereof the cause of all iniquity, I thought it good to pass over other places of ghostly instruction which this Gospel might minister, and to tarry upon this one sentence, "Know ye not that I must go about my father's business?" Intending to shew in order, how all estates of men, the clergy, the nobility, and the commonalty, are under the band of this obligation, oportet, we must, and ought of necessity to be occupied in our heavenly father's business.—But first of all, mistrusting wholly mine own strength, I crave aid of you by your devout prayers.

Know ye not that I must go about my Father's Business?

AFTER that our first parents, through disobedience and sin, had blotted and disfigured the lively image of God, whereunto they were created, and might have lived alway in a conformity to the will of God; man was never able to apply himself to God his father's business, nor yet so much as to know what appertained thereto. "The natural man," saith St. Paul, "perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God," till Christ, the very sure image of God the father, did come down, and took man's nature upon him; which descent, as he declareth,

was to fulfil for us the will of his father, that "like as by disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one (Christ) many might be made righteous, what time as he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Which obedience, lest carnal men should challenge to suffice for them, howsoever their life be a continual rebellion against God and his holy will, such as there be a great number, and have been in all ages, St. Paul wipeth them clean away, saying, "Christ hath become salvation, not to all, but to all that obey him." Let no man therefore flatter and deceive himself. If we will challenge the name of Christ's disciples, if we will worthily possess the glorious name of Christians, we must learn this lesson of our master, to be occupied in our heavenly father's business; which is, to fly our own will, which is a wicked and wanton will, and wholly to conform ourselves to his will, saying, as we are taught, "thy will be done: which," as St. Augustine saith, "the fleshly man, the covetous, adulterous, ravenous, or deceitful man, can never say but with his lips, because in his heart he preferreth his own cursed will, setting aside the will of God."

Now forasmuch as the greatest part of the world hath at this day forsaken their father's business, applying their own, and are altogether drowned in sin; for, "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is heavy: from the sole of the foot to the head, there is nothing whole therein," and as St. Paul saith, "all seek their own, and not that which is Jesus Christ's;" and as I am here ascended into the high hill of Sion, the highest hill in all this realm, I must needs, as it is given me in commission, "cry aloud and spare not; lift up my voice like a trumpet, and shew the people their transgressions." I must cry unto all estates, as well of the ecclesiastical ministry, as of the civil governance, with the vulgar people.

But forasmuch as example of holy Scriptures, with experience of Christ's church in all ages, hath taught us that the fall of priests is the fall of the people; and contrarywise, the integrity of them is the preservation of the whole flock; and the ministers, as Christ saith, being "the light of his mystical body, if the light be turned into darkness, there must needs follow great darkness in the whole body;" I think it fit to begin with them, who seem to have brought blindness into the whole body, making men to forget their heavenly father's business: they which should have kept the candle still burning, these will I chiefly examine in that business which Christ so earnestly committed to all pastors before his ascension, when he demanded thrice of Peter if he loved him; and every time upon Peter's confession, enjoined him straightly to feed his lambs and sheep; wherein we have the true trial of all ministers who love Christ, and apply his business.

But to consider how it hath been forgotten in the church many years, it might make a Christian's heart to bleed. He that wrote the general chronicle of ages, when he cometh to the time of John VIII. and Martin II. bishops of Rome about six hundred years ago, conferring the golden ages going before, with the iniquity of that time, when through ambition, avarice, and contention, the office of setting forth God's word was brought to an utter contempt, and trodden under foot, in token whereof the Bible was made the bishop's footstool, he falleth to a sudden exclamation, and complaineth thus with the lamentable voice of the prophet Jeremy, "O Lord God, how is the gold become so dim? How is the goodly colour of it so changed? O most ungracious time," saith he, "wherein the holy man faileth, or is not. All truths are diminished from the sons of men: there are no godly men left: the faithful are worn out among the children of men." In that time, as it appeared both by this history and others, ambition and

greedy avarice hath taught ministers to seek and contend for livings, who might climb the highest by utter contempt of their office, and our heavenly Father's business: and so to make Christ's flock a ready prey for the devil, "who goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Then the bishop of Rome, abusing always Peter's keys to fill Judas's satchels, dispensed with all prelates that brought any money in obeying Christ's commission given to Peter, "Feed, feed my lambs and my sheep;" and stretched it so largely, that instead of feeding Christ's lambs and sheep, he allowed them to feed hawks, hounds, and horses, I will not say harlots. Then, instead of fishers of men, he made them to become fishers of benefices and fat livings. He brought preaching into such a contempt, that it was accounted a great absurdity for a cardinal to preach, after he had once bestrid his mule.

But let us see after, how this evil increased. St. Bernard in his time, about two hundred years after, lamented that when open persecution of tyrants and heretics were ceased in the church, then another persecution, far worse, and more noisome to Christ's Gospel, did succeed; when the ministers, Christ's own friends by pretence, were turned into persecutors. "My lovers and my kinsmen stand aside from my plague: and my kinsmen stand afar off." The iniquity of the church, saith Bernard, began at the elders.—"Alas, alas, O Lord God, they are the foremost in persecuting of thee, which are thought to love the chiefest place or pre-eminence in the church." This complaint, with much more too long to be rehearsed, against the prelates of Rome, made St. Bernard in his time, nothing afraid in the same place to call them antichrists; and for murdering of silly souls, redeemed with Christ's precious blood, he maketh them more cruel persecutors of Christ, than the Jews which shed his blood.

If the iniquity of Rome, four hundred years ago

was so great, and since hath not a little increased, it was high time that God should open the eyes of some Christian princes, to see the great abuses and enormities of Romish bishops, and to deliver Christ's Gospel out of captivity, and to bring down his horns, whose pride, if he might have had success in his tyranny, began to ascend with Lucifer above the stars.

It is not many years ago, that a champion of theirs, named Pelagius, writing against Marsilius Paduanus in defence of Rome, hath not been ashamed to leave in writing, that the pope (*quodammodo*, after a sort) doth participate both natures, the godhead and manhood, with Christ; and that he may not be judged of the emperor, because he is not a mere man, but as a God upon earth; and God, saith he, may not be judged of man. What intolerable blasphemy is this? If I had not read it myself, I could scarcely believe any such blasphemy to proceed from him which professeth Christ. Do you not perceive plainly the hissing and poison of the old serpent, when he tempted our first parents, and promised they should become like Gods? A vile wretched creature, worms' meat, forgetting his estate, must become a God upon earth.—Such Gods sha'l follow Jupiter, Mars, and Venus, into the pit of damnation.

But some will say, what should we speak so much of the bishop of Rome? Is he not gone? His power taken away? If preachers would let him alone, the people would soon forget him. Truly, for my part, if I had that gift, strength, and calling, I had rather (though I were sure to smart therefore) speak against his enormities in Rome, than to speak of them here: and I think no man beareth, at least I am sure no man ought to bear, any malice or evil against his person, in speaking against his vice and iniquity: "We fight not," saith St. Paul, "against flesh and blood; but we fight against the prince of darkness," &c. When any wicked man, adversary to God and his word, assaileth us, we must take him for no other but as an instrument of the devil, and Satan himself

to be our enemy, and none other; and even as when an enemy assaileth us on horseback, we wish to overthrow the enemy and win the horse, which may be profitable to us; so if the devil could be cast out of such instruments as he hath in Rome, the men would become profitable members of Christ. But if the devil sit so fast in the saddle, that he cannot be turned out, we cannot amend it. Yet our duty is to pray unto God for them; and to hate none of God's creatures, but rather that which Satan hath depraved, "if peradventure God will turn their hearts."

But notwithstanding, their faults ought to be chiefly told them in their presence; yet not there only, but even here amongst us also. Although it come not to their ears, it is not a little expedient oftentimes to cry and thunder against their errors and vices; chiefly, that so oft as we hear it, we may give God thanks, as we are most bounden, for our deliverance from that captivity of Babylon, as St. Peter himself, by the mind of ancient writers, called it. Examples hereof we have in the Scriptures: the song of the Israelites, after their deliverance out of Egypt; and afterwards, when they were delivered by Deborah from the tyranny of Sisera; and after the deliverance from Holofernes by Judith. We must be thankful, lest for our unthankfulness God suffer us to fall into a worse bondage than ever we were in.—But most of all it is profitable, that we may from our hearts renounce with Babylon all the vices of Babylon. For what did profit the deliverance out of Egypt, to those that did still carry Egypt in their minds through the desert? What did it avail the deliverance out of Babylon, to those that did bring Babylon home to Jerusalem? I fear me, yet in England a great many, like fleshly Israelites, are weary of the sweet manna of the Gospel, and savour of the fleshly Egypt, desiring to live still under the bondage of Pharaoh.

But most of all, it is expedient now for my purpose to speak of that sea, from whence, so far as ever I could learn, those intolerable abuses have overflowed, and are come among us; which as yet are great enemies to Christ's Gospel here in England, making his ministers to set aside his business: such abuses as cannot yet be driven away, nor sent home to Rome to their father: I mean dispensations for pluralities, and totquots, with dispensations for non-residents, which avarice and idleness transported hither from Rome. But for that they savour sweet for a time to carnal men, they have so many patrons, that they cannot be driven away with other abuses.

And because they are accounted to stand by law, they are used as cloaks for iniquity. These may well be likened unto those fatlings which Saul, against God's commandment, did keep alive when he vanquished the Amalekites. And truly, till there be ordained some godly laws to banish these, with other abuses, God's wrath is kindled against us to destroy all such as are maintainers of them. So long as it shall be lawful for men to have so many livings as they can get, and discharge never a one; and so long as men may have livings to lie where they will in idleness, far from their cure, fattening themselves like the devil's porklings, and letting a thousand souls perish for lack of spiritual food, God's business shall never be well applied, nor his Gospel have success in England.

It is pity that ever it should be needful to wish any laws to be made by man, to bring ministers of God's word to do their duty, being so plainly expressed in God's law. If our hearts were not hardened more than Pharaoh's, our judgment more blinded with insensibleness of heavenly things than the Sodomites, we should tremble and quake more at one threatening of God's vengeance against negligent pastors that feed themselves and set aside their heavenly Father's business, whereof the Scripture is

full in every place, than we should fear all the powers upon earth, which, as Christ saith, having power only of the body, cannot hurt the soul.—O Lord, how dare men be so bold as to take on them the name of Christ's ministers, and utterly refuse the work of their ministry, by leaving their flock, God's word being so plain against them!

I marvel not so much at blind bayards, which never take God's book in hand; ignorance hath blinded them: they know not the price of man's soul; but truly, I could never enough marvel at learned men, which read the Scriptures, where their hearts and understanding should be, when they read almost in every leaf of Scripture, besides all antient writers, their own sharp sentence and judgment, which a whole day were too little to bring them in.—O merciful God, where be their eyes to see, their ears to hear; Do they think there is a God which is not master of his word? I will let pass how they are called of the Holy Ghost by most odious names, thieves, robbers, hypocrites, idols, wolves, dumb dogs, with many such like, worthy their deserts. I will only declare, which methinks might suffice if there were no more, how the Scripture maketh them most cruel murderers, and guilty of blood. In the thirty fourth of Ecclesiasticus it is written, "The bread of the needful is the life of the poor; he that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood." If this sentence be true in them that defraud the needy of their corporal food, how much more are they which withhold the food of the soul, being the worthier part of man, guilty of blood? And therefore God, by his prophet Ezekiel, telleth them, "So many as perish by their negligence, their blood shall be required at their hands, as men guilty of blood." Now let them consider, that if the blood of Abel, one man, cried up unto heaven for vengeance against Cain, what a horrible cry shall the blood of a thousand souls make before the throne of God asking

vengeance against that wicked pastor, which most cruelly hath hungered them to death, in withholding from them the food of life! The gold they lay up yearly, brought far off by farmers; their rings and jewels; their fine apparel; their beds they lie on; their meat and drink, being the spoil of the poor; cry all for vengeance: the stones in the wall, the timber over their heads, cry for vengeance.

Alas, how far are they from excusing themselves with St. Paul, saying to the people of Ephesus, "I take you to record this day, I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have spared no labour, but have shewed all the counsel of God unto you." But alas, these men may rather say, that they have kept counsel of God's counsel: and where St. Paul preached publicly, and by houses, these men keep silence, lest they should disquiet the devil in his fort; of whom Christ saith, "When a strong man armed watcheth his house, the things that he possesseth are in peace." They say with the evil servant, "My master is long a coming, and so beats his fellow-servants," like cruel murderers and tyrants, whose judgment shall be straiter than any Pharaoh, Nero, or Domitian, that ever reigned. But alas, it helpeth nothing to call or cry upon them, "They have hardened their hearts as an adamant stone." Lazarus hath lain so long buried and stinking in worldly lusts and sensualities, the preacher cannot call him out, nor yet remove the gravestone.—What shall I then do?—I must call unto you, most noble prince, and Christ's anointed.

I am * come this day to preach to the king, and to those which be in authority under him. I am very sorry they should be absent, which ought to give example, and encourage others to the hearing of God's word: and I am the more sorry for that other preachers before me complain much of their absence.

* The king being absent, these words were added extempore.

But you will say they have weighty affairs in hand. Alas, hath God any greater business than this? If I could cry with the voice of Stentor, I would make them hear in their chambers; but in their absence I will speak to their seats, as if they were present.

I will call unto you, noble prince, as Christ's anointed. Christ's little flock here in England, which he hath committed to your charge, which wander by many thousands, as sheep having no pastors: they cry all unto you for succour, to send them home their shepherds, to the end that for things corporal, they may receive things spiritual; and to let one pastor have one only competent living, which he may discharge. They call upon you to expel and drive away the great drones, which in idleness devour other men's labour: that after St. Paul's rule, "He that will not labour, be not suffered to eat. The little ones have asked bread, &c." Christ's little ones have hungered and called for the food of the Gospel a long time, and none there was to give it them. Now they cry unto you, take heed you turn not your ears from them, lest their blood be required at your hands also, and lest God turn his ears from you. Samuel spake unto Saul fearful words, "Because thou hast cast away the word of the Lord, the Lord hath therefore cast away thee from being king." You are made of God a pastor, a pastor of pastors. When David was anointed king of Israel, God said, "Thou shalt feed my people Israel." You must feed, and that is, to see that all pastors do their duty. The eye of the master hath great strength. Your grace's eye to look through your realm, and see that watchmen sleep not, shall be worth a great number of preachers. They call unto you to awake not only negligent pastors, but also to take away other enormities, which have followed in heaps upon those evils, pluralities and non-residents.

If I might have time, I think I should be able to

prove, that the great swarm of evils which reign at this day, have flowed from those fountains, or rather puddles. But I will only speak of the great abuses which by spoil or robbery do hide the Gospel, how they have ensued.

First of all, the dispensations of non-residents have brought forth farming of benefices to gentlemen, laymen, wherein they have found such sweetness, and worldly wealth, that preachers cannot have them, they will be perpetual farmers; which hath opened a gap for the heathen, as David saith, or else for cloaked Christians, much worse than the heathen, who have entered into Christ's inheritance, spoiled his holy temple, and robbed his Gospel. Such seem to make composition with our great enemy Satan: the idle pastor saying, give to me riches, take the rest to thy share; whom Satan answereth, if thou wilt betray to me the souls, take riches for thy part.

Another gap hath been opened, for that the learned have not done their duties, no more than the unlearned; hereby Christ's vineyard hath been utterly spoiled. Patrons see that none do their duty. They think as good to put in asses as men. The bishops were never so liberal in making of lewd priests, but they are as liberal in making lewd vicars. I dare say, if such a monster as Dervell Gatherel, the idol of Wales, burnt in Smithfield, should have set his hand to a bill to let the patron take the greatest part of the profits, he might have had a benefice. There is never any question how he can occupy himself in God's business. John Gerson a learned man in his time, witnesseth, that whosoever in that time was admitted to a benefice in France, must answer to this question, *Scis utrumque testamentum?* Knowest thou the Old Testament and the New? And the ignorant was put back. But with these men, it skilleth not, if he never opened the Bible, so much the meeter for their purpose, as he is not able

to speak against their abuses, but will suffer them to sleep in their sin.—And will you see what preposterous judgment they use? For all worldly offices they search meet and convenient men; only Christian souls, so dearly bought, are committed without respect, to men not worthy to keep sheep.

Your grace hath sent forth surveyors, as most needful it was, to see there should be no deceit in payment of pensions, and other offices abroad: would to God you would also send forth surveyors to see how benefices are bestowed and used; how Christ and his Gospel are robbed and dishonoured, to the great decay of your realm and commonwealth: you should find a small number of patrons that bestow rightly their livings, seeking God's glory, and that his work and business may be rightly applied, without simony, or seeking their own profit.

For first, it is almost general, to reserve the farming to himself, or his friend; and to appoint the rent at his own pleasure.—But worse than this, a great number never farm them at all, but keep them as their own lands, and give some three-halfpenny priest a curate's wages, nine or ten pounds. Even as Jeroboam made priests of his own for his hill-altars, to sacrifice to his calves, that the people should not go up to Jerusalem. These Jeroboams will never let the people ascend to Jerusalem, to find Christ in the temple of his word. They began first with parsonages, and seemed to have some conscience towards vicarages; but now their hearts be so hardened, all is fish that cometh to the net. Gentlemen are parsons and vicars both, nothing can escape them. There be vicarages about London, having a thousand people, so spoiled; whereby it may appear what is done further off.—Your grace may find also, where gentlemen keep in their hands livings of forty or fifty pounds, and give one that never cometh there five or six pounds. Some change the ground of the benefice with their tenants, to the intent, if it be

called for, the tenant shall lose it and not they. Is not this a godly patron?—It shall appear also, I could name the place, where a living of an hundred marks by the year, if I say not pounds, hath been sold for many years, I suppose an hundred save one, and so continueth still.—O good St. Ambrose, if thou hadst been bishop there, thou wouldst never have suffered such wolves to devour the flock. It may well be called a devouring; for this living in a godly learned pastor's hand might have refreshed five hundred in a year with ghostly food, and all the country about with God's word; which, as I perceive, in twenty miles' compass hath scarce one man to preach; and yet no place in England more needful, for boys and girls of fourteen or fifteen years old cannot say the Lord's prayer. Shall such injury to Christ and his Gospel be suffered in a Christian realm? That one enormity crieth for vengeance till it be redressed.—What shall I speak? Your noblemen reward their servants with livings appointed for the Gospel. Certainly I marvel that God holdeth his hand, that he destroyeth them not with Nadab and Abihu. Let them not abuse God's patience; for if they do not shortly repent, and bestow their livings better, both master and man shall burn in hell fire.

I am not able to rehearse, nor yet any man knoweth all the abuses which the simoniacs, ambitious and idle pastors, have brought unto your realm; by whose evil example ravenous wolves, painted Christians, hypocrites, have entered and defiled the sanctuary; spoiled Christ and his Gospel, to the destruction of his flock. How great enemies they be to Christ, by keeping away his Gospel, it shall appear, if ye consider what gross superstition and blindness remaineth still among the people, only through lack of faithful preachers. I pass over much infidelity, idolatry, sorcery, charming, witchcrafts, conjuring, trusting in figures, with such other

trumpery, which lurk in corners, and began of late to come abroad only for lack of preaching. Come to the ministration of the Sacraments, set forth now by common authority after the first institution. They think baptism is not effectual, because it wanteth man's tradition. They are not taught how the Apostles baptised. A great number think it is a great offence to take the Sacrament of Christ's body in their hands, that have no conscience to receive it with blasphemous mouths, with malicious hearts, full of all uncleanness. These come to it by threes of custom, without any spiritual hunger, and know not the end wherefore it was instituted. They come to the church to feed their eyes, and not their souls; they are not taught that no visible thing is to be worshipped; and for because they see not in the church the shining pomp and pleasing variety (as they thought it) of painted cloths, candlesticks, images, altars, lamps, and tapers, they say, as good to go into a barn; nothing esteeming Christ which speaketh to them in his Holy Word, neither his Holy Sacrament reduced to the first institution. To be short, the people are now, even as the Jews were at Christ's coming, altogether occupied in external holiness and culture, without any feeling of true holiness, or of the true worship of God in spirit and truth, without the which all other is mere hypocrisy. Many thousands know not what this meaneth; but seek Christ still among their kindred, in man's inventions, where they can never find him. As the Jews preferred man's traditions before God's commandments, even so it is now. Men think it a greater offence to break a fasting day, or work upon a saint's day, than to abstain from profitable labour, and turn it to Bacchus's feasts, exercising more ungodliness that day than all the week, despising or soon weary of God's word.—All this, with much more, cometh through lack of preaching, as experience trieth, where godly pastors be.—It cannot much be mar-

velled, if the simple and ignorant people, by some wicked heads and firebrands of hell, be sometimes seduced to rebel against their prince and lawful magistrates, seeing they are never taught to know their obedience and duty to their king and sovereign, so straitly commanded in God's law.

But there hangeth over us a great evil, if your grace do not help it in time; the devil goeth about by these cormorants that devour these livings appointed for the Gospel, to make a fortress and bulwark to keep learned pastors from the flock: that is, so to decay learning, that there shall be none learned to commit the flock unto. For by reason livings appointed for the ministry for the most part are either robbed of the best part, or clean taken away; almost none have any zeal or devotion to put their children to school, but to learn to write, to make them apprentices, or else to have them lawyers. Look upon the two wells of this realm, Oxford and Cambridge; they are almost dried up. The cruel Philistines abroad, enemies to Christ's Gospel, have stopped up the springs of faithful Abraham. The decay of students is so great, there are scarce left of every thousand an hundred. If they decay so fast in seven years more, there will be almost none at all; and then may the devil make a triumph. This matter requireth speedy redress. The miseries of your people cry upon you, noble prince, and Christ for his flock crieth to you his anointed, to defend his lambs from these ravenous wolves, that rob and spoil his vineyard; by whose malicious endeavour, if your grace do not speedily resist, there is entering into England more blind ignorance, superstition, and infidelity, than ever was under the Romish bishop. Your realm (which I am sorry to speak) shall become more barbarous than Scythia; which, less God Almighty lay to your grace's charge, for suffering the sword given to you for the maintenance of the Gospel to lie rusting in the sheath, bestir now yourself

in your heavenly father's business; withstanding these cormorants by godly laws, which rob Christ's Gospel and tread it down. "They eat up God's people as it were bread." Your grace shall have more true renown and glory before God, by defending Christ's Gospel against them, than by conquering all Africa. You shall do God more service by resisting this tyranny of the devil and his members, than by vanquishing the great Turk. Cut first away the occasions of all this mischief, dispensations for pluralities, and totquots for non-residents. Suffer no longer the tithes of the farthest parts of England to be paid at Paul's font. Cause every pastor, as his living will extend, to keep hospitality.—But many think themselves excused for a year or two, because their livings are taken away the first year; which undoubtedly doth not excuse them for their presence: I had rather beg or borrow of my friends, to help me to meat and cloaths, than suffer the devil to have such liberty one year. It is no small number of souls that may perish by one year's absence. Moses was from the people but forty days, and they fell to idolatry.

Howbeit, forasmuch as the Scripture doth allow the minister a living the first year also. ("He that serveth at the altar, let him live of the altar;" and again, "Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the corn.") I do not doubt, but after your grace, with the advice of your honourable council, have considered how much it may set forth God's glory, how many souls may be delivered from the devil by sending pastors to their livings the first month, and suffering them to have no cloak of absence, you will soon restore the first year's living, which in my conscience was wrongfully taken away at the first, as I suppose, by the bishop of Rome. But I doubt not, if all were well redressed to this, that this also should soon be amended. Wherefore, here I will desire God to assist your grace in the advancement of his

Gospel, which, like unto Josias, you have helped to bring to light where it lay hid.

But yet it is not heard of all your people. A thousand pulpits in England are covered with dust. Some have not had four sermons these fifteen or sixteen years, since friars left their limitations; and few of those were worthy the name of sermons. Now therefore, that your glory may be perfect, all men's expectation is, that whatsoever any flatterers, or enemies to God's word should labour to the contrary for their own lucre; your grace will take away all such lets and abuses, as hinder the setting forth of God's most holy word, and withstand all such robbers, as spoil his sanctuary; travelling to send pastors home to their flocks, to feed Christ's lambs and sheep, that all may be occupied in their heavenly father's business. And for this your travel, as St. Peter saith, "when the prince of all pastors shall appear, you shall receive an incorruptible crown of glory."

And thus far concerning the ecclesiastical ministry.

But now to come to the civil governance, the nobility, magistrates, and officers; all these must at all times remember, they must be occupied "in their heavenly father's business." They have received all their nobility, power, dominion, authority and offices, of God; which are excellent and heroidal gifts: and if they be occupied in God's business, it shall redound to his glory, and the wealth of his people; but if they fall from his business, and follow their own will, or rather the will of Satan, the prince of darkness, and father of all the children of darkness, then shall all these glorious titles turn them to names of confusion. For falling unto ungodliness, and framing themselves to the shape and fashion of this world, nobility is turned into vile slavery and bondage of sin, power and dominion are turned into tyranny, authority is become a sword:

of mischief in a madman's hand, all majesty and honour is turned into misery, shame, and confusion; and even the higher men be, while they serve sin, the more notable is their vice, and more pestiferous to infect by evil examples; because all mens' eyes are bent to behold their doings. "Every fault of the mind is so much more evident, as the party is more notable who hath it," saith Juvenal. For the worthier the person is which offendeth, the more his offence is noted of others; seeing that virtue in all whom God hath exalted is the maintainer of their dignity, without the which they fall from it. It shall be most needful for them to embrace virtue, and chiefly humility, which is the keeper of all virtues; which may put them ever in remembrance from whence power is given them, for what end, who is above them, a judge, an examiner of all their doings, who cannot be deceived. But as dignity goeth now-a-days, climb who may climb highest, every man exalteth himself, and tarrieth not the calling of God. Humility is taken for no keeper, but for an utter enemy to nobility. As I heard of a wicked climber and exalter of himself, who hearing the sentence of Christ in the Gospel, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," he most blasphemously against God's holy word said, "Sure it was not true; for if I," said he, "had not put forth, nor advanced myself, but followed this rule, I had never come to this dignity:" for which blasphemy, the vengeance of God smote him with sudden death.

I fear me a great number are in England, which though in words they deny not this sentence of Christ's, yet inwardly they can scarce digest it; else certainly they would never seek so ambitiously to advance themselves, to climb by their own might, uncalled; never seeking the public weal, but rather the destruction thereof, for their private wealth and lucre; which causeth us to have so many evil magistrates. For all the while that men gather goods

unjustly, by polling, pilling, usury, extortion, and simony, and therewith seek to climb with bribes and buying of offices, it is scarce possible for such to be wholesome magistrates. They enter in at the window (which is used as well in civil government as in ecclesiastical) and therefore may Christ's words well be verified, "He that entereth not in at the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." And Isaiah's complaint against Jerusalem taketh place among us, "Thy princes are wicked, and companions of thieves; they love gifts altogether, and gape for rewards: as for the fatherless, they help not him in his right, neither will they let the widows cause come before them." They will not know their office to be ordained of God, for the wealth and defence of all innocents, for the aid of all that be in misery. The time is come that Solomon speaketh of, "When the wicked man bears rule, the people shall mourn." When had ever the people such cause to mourn as now, when the greatest number of all magistrates are occupied in their own business; seeking rather the misery of the people, than to take it away; rather to oppress them, than to defend them. Their hands be ready to receive their money, to rob and spoil them; but their ears are shut from hearing their complaints, they are blind to behold their calamities.

Look in all countries how lady Avarice hath set on work altogether, mighty men, gentlemen, and rich men, to rob and spoil the poor; to turn them from their livings and from their right; for ever the weakest go to the wall. And being thus tormented, and put from their right at home, they come to London in great numbers, as to a place where justice should be had, and there they can have none. They are suitors to great men, and cannot come to their speech; their servants must have bribes, and that no small ones; "all love bribes." But such as be so

dainty to hear the poor, let them take heed lest God make it as strange to them when they shall call: for as Solomon saith, “Whoso stoppeth his ear at the crying of the poor, he shall cry and not be heard.” We find that poor men might come to complain of their wrongs to the king’s own person. King Joram, although he was one of the sons of Ahab (no good king) yet heard the poor widow’s cause, and caused her to have right: such was the use then.—I would to God that all noblemen would diligently note that chapter, and follow the example: it would not then be so hard for the poor to have access to them; nor coming to their presence, they should not be made so astonished and even speechless with terrible looks, but should mercifully and lovingly be heard, and succoured gladly for Christ’s love, considering we are the members of his body; even as my hand would be glad to help my foot when it is annoyed.—O with what glad hearts and clear consciences might noblemen go to rest, when they had bestowed the whole day in hearing Christ himself complain in his members, and redressing his wrongs! But alas! for lack hereof, poor people are driven to seek their right among the lawyers; and there, as the prophet Joel saith, look what the caterpillars had left in their robbery and oppression at home, all that doth the greedy locusts, the lawyers, devour in London: they laugh with the money which maketh others to weep: and thus are the poor robbed on every side without redress, and that of such as seem to have authority thereto.

When Christ suffered his passion, there was one Barabbas, St. Matthew called him a notable thief, a gentleman thief, such as rob now-a-days in velvet coats; the other two were obscure thieves, and nothing famous. The rustical thieves were hanged, and Barabbas was delivered. Even so now-a-days, the little thieves are hanged that steal of necessity, but

the great Barabbases have free liberty to rob and to spoil without all measure, in the midst of the city. The poor pirate said to Alexander, "We rob but a few in a ship, but thou robbest whole countries and kingdoms."—Alas, silly poor members of Christ, how you be shorn, oppressed, pulled, halled to and fro on every side: who cannot but lament, if his heart be not of flint! There be a great number every term, and many continually, which lamentably complain for lack of justice, but all in vain. They spend that which they had left, and many times more; whose ill-success here causeth thousands to tarry at home beggars, and lose their right—and so it were better, than here to sell their coats: for this we see, be the poor man's cause never so manifest a truth, the rich shall for money find six or seven counsellors, that shall stand with subtleties and sophisms to cloak an evil matter, and hide a known truth.—A piteous case in a Christian commonwealth! Alas, that ever manifest falsehood should be maintained, where the God of truth ought to be honoured!—But let them alone; they are occupied in their father's business, even the prince of darkness: "you are of your father the devil."

Yet I cannot so leave them: I must needs cry on God's behalf to his patrons of justice, to you most redoubted prince, whom God hath made his minister for their defence, with all those whom God hath placed in authority under you. Look upon their misery, for this is our heavenly father's business to you, appointed by his Holy Word. When I come among the people, I call upon them, as my duty is, for service, duty, and obedience unto their prince, to all magistrates, to their lords, and to all that be put in authority over them; I let them hear their own faults: But in this place my duty is, and my conscience upon God's word bindeth me, seeing them so miserably, so wrongfully, so cruelly intreated on every side, in God's behalf to plead their cause;

not by force of man's law, but by God's word, as an intercessor. For as they are debtors unto you, and other magistrates, for love, fear, service, and obedience under God; so are you debtors unto them for love, protection, for justice and equity, mercy and pity. If you deny them these, they must suffer, but God shall revenge them. "He standeth," saith David, "in the congregation of gods, and as a judge among gods." Take heed all you that be counted as gods, God's ministers on earth; you have one God judge over you, who, as he saith in the same psalm, sharply rebuketh ungodly rulers for accepting of persons of the ungodly; so he telleth Christian magistrates their true duties and business in plain words, "Defend the poor and needy, see that such as be in necessity have right, deliver the outcast and poor, save them from the hands of the ungodly." Here have all noblemen and Christian magistrates most lively set forth to them their heavenly father's business, wherein he would have them continually occupied:—would to God the whole psalm were graven in their hearts!

Truly for lack that this business is not applied, but the poor despised in all places, it hath given such boldness to covetous cormorants abroad, that now their robberies, extortion, and open oppression, hath no end nor limits, no banks can keep in their violence. As for turning poor men out of their holds, they take it for no offence, but say, their land is their own; and forget altogether that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." They turn them out of their shrouds as mice. Thousands in England, through such beg now from door to door, which have kept honest houses. These cry daily to God for vengeance, both against the great Nimrod's workers thereof, and their maintainers. There be so many mighty Nimrods in England, mighty hunters, that hunt for possessions and lordships, that poor men are daily hunted out of their livings; there

is no covert or den can keep them safe. These Nimrods have such quick smelling hounds, they can lie at London and turn men out of their farms and tenements an hundred, some two hundred miles off.—O Lord, when wicked Ahab hunted after Naboth's vineyard, he could not, though he were a king, obtain that prey, till cursed Jezebel (as women oft-times have shrewd wits) took the matter in hand: so hard a thing it was then to wring a man from his father's inheritance, which now a mean man will take in land. And now our valiant Nimrods can compass the matter without the help of Jezebels; yet hath England even now a great number of Jezebels, which to maintain their intolerable pride, their golden heads, will not stick to put to their wicked hands.—O Lord, what number of such oppressors, worse than Ahab, are in England, which “sell the poor for a pair of shoes;” of whom if God should serve but three or four, as he did Ahab, and make the dogs lap the blood of them, I think it would cause a great number to beware of extortion, to beware of oppression: and yet escaping temporal punishments, they are certain by God's word, their blood is reserved for hell-hounds, which they nothing fear. A pitiful case, and great blindness, that hearing God's word, man should more fear temporal punishment than everlasting.

Yet hath England had of late some terrible examples of God's wrath in sudden and strange deaths, of such as join field to field, and house to house: great pity they were not chronicled to the terror of others, which fear neither God nor man; so hardened in sin, that they seek not to hide it, but rather are such as glory in their mischief. Which maketh me oftentimes to remember a writer in our time, Musculus, upon St. Matthew's Gospel, which marvelled much at the subtle and manifold working of Satan; how he after the expelling of superstition and hypocrisy, travelleth most busily to

bring in open impiety: that whereas before, men feared men, though not God, now a great number fear neither God nor man: the most wicked are counted most manlike, and innocency holden beastliness.

Yet may we not say, hypocrisy is expelled: for as many of these Ahabs as signify they favour God's word by reading or hearing it, or with prayer, "honouring him," as Christ saith, "with their lips, their hearts being far from him," are as detestable hypocrites as ever were covered in cowl or cloister. I cannot liken them better than to the Jews that said to Christ, "Hail, king of the Jews." What their painted friendship is, and how of Christ it is esteemed, St. Austin setteth forth by an apt similitude: "Even as," saith he, "a man should come up to embrace thee, to kiss and honour thee upward, and beneath, with a pair of shoes beaten full of nails, tread upon thy bare foot; the head shall despise the honour done unto it, and for the foot that smarteth say, Why treadest thou upon me? So when feigned gospellers honour Christ our head sitting in heaven, and oppress his members on earth, the head shall speak for the feet that smart, and say, why treadest thou on me?" Paul had a zeal towards God, but he did tread upon Christ's feet on earth, for whom the head cried forth of heaven, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Although Christ sitteth at the right hand of his father, yet lieth he in earth, he suffereth all calamities here on earth, he is many times evil intreated here on earth.

Would to God we could bear away this brief and short lesson, that what we do to his members upon earth, we do to him; it would bring men from oppression to shew mercy, without which no man can obtain mercy. If they would remember how the rich glutton was damned in hell, not, as we read, for any violence, but for not showing mercy, they might soon gather how sharp judgment remaineth for them,

which are not only unmerciful, but also violently add thereunto oppression; who are so far from mercy that their hearts will serve them to destroy whole towns; they would wish all the people destroyed, to have all the fields brought to a sheep pasture. O cruel mercy! It is like to the mercy of a bishop of Magunce in Germany, named Hatto, which, as the chronicles mention, five hundred years ago, in time of a great dearth, called all the poor people in all the whole country into a great barn, pretending to make a great dole; but having them sure, he fired the barn, and burnt them all up, saying, "These be the mice which devour up the corn." This was a policy to make bread more cheap, but for this unmerciful mercy, God made him an example for all unmerciful men to the world's end; for a multitude of rats came and devoured him in such terrible sort, that where his name was written in windows, walls or hangings, they never ceased till it were razed out. —Some, peradventure, shrink to hear such cruelty: but doubtless there is almost daily as great cruelty practised among us by such blood-suckers, as being infected with the great dropsy of avarice, alway drinking and ever a-thirst, by famishing poor people, drinking up their blood, and with long continuance therein, torment them more grievously than he that burnt them all in one hour.

Now seeing, as I said, this cruelty, robbery, and extortion, groweth daily to such intolerable excess, and overfloweth this realm, because it is not punished nor restrained; it is high time for all those magistrates that fear God, not only to abstain from this evil themselves, but to resist it also. It is God's business, he hath commanded it, and will straitly require it. Would to God all noblemen would beware by the example of Saul. He was commanded to apply God's business, "Go and smite Amalek, and have no compassion on them," &c. he left his business undone, spared Amalek, and the fairest of

the beasts : but for this negligence he received of Samuel a sorrowful message from God ; “ because thou hast cast away the word of the Lord, he hath cast thee off also from being king.” Even so in every Christian commonwealth, God hath commanded rulers to destroy Amalek, all extortion, oppression, and robbery, to defend the needy and all innocents. If they look not to this business, but suffer Amalek to live, not only to live, but to grow in might ; so truly as God liveth, he shall cast them off, they shall not be his magistrates.

But let it once be known, that not only our most noble king, whose godly example is a lantern to all other, but that also all his nobles about him have wholly bent themselves in his business, to withstand all violence, and to oppose all oppression, for defence of God’s people ; that the wicked Ahabs might know, that God had in England a great number of pastors, patrons, feeders and cherishers of his people : it should do that which the fear of God cannot do ; that is, stop the great rage of violence, oppression, and extortion : which taken away, would pluck from many their vanity in superfluous and monstrous apparel, sumptuous building, such as seek to bring paradise into earth, being the greatest causes of all oppression and spoiling of poor people ; which most unchristian vanities, and blind affections, never reigned so much in all estates in England as at this day. It was a notable saying of Charles V. emperor of that name, to the duke of Venice, when he had seen his princely palace ; when the duke looked that he should have praised it exceedingly, Charles gave it none other commendation but this, “ *Hæc sunt quæ faciunt invitos mori* : These earthly vanities,” said he, “ are what make us loth to die.” A truer sentence could not well be spoken by any man. I could wish we would look on all our buildings, when the beauty thereof so increaseth, that it would grieve us to depart from it, and to remember with all the

holy patriarchs, and with St. Paul say, that "we have not here a continuing city, but we seek one to come."

But truly methinks now in England, for our vain delight in curious buildings, God hath plagued us, as he did the builders of Babel, not with the confusion of tongues, but with the confusion of wits. Our fancies can never be pleased: pluck down and set up, and when it contenteth us not, down with it again. Our minds are never contented, nor ever shall be, while we seek felicity where it is not. Would God every one would consider what a hell it should be to all that vainly delight herein, when death shall with great violence pluck them from their earthly heaven. Moreover, extortion taken away shall soon abate the unmeasurable excess in costly fare. It would also abate the intolerable excess in apparel, which causeth us to have robbers in velvet coats, with St. Martin's chains.—But I must for lack of time pass over these enormities, which alone give matter enough for whole sermons: I leave them for others which shall follow, more able to paint out such monsters in their colours.

And here in conclusion, I desire all noblemen and godly magistrates, deeply to ponder and revolve in their memory what acceptable service they may do, chiefly to God, and secondly to the king's majesty, and his whole realm, in employing their whole study how to resist all such as spoil Christ's people, whom he so tenderly loved, that he shed his blood for them. Virtue joined with nobility spreadeth her beams over a whole realm. And so your diligence in God's business shall soon inflame all other to follow your example, that all may occupy themselves in God's business.

But now that I have hitherto charged the ecclesiastical ministers, and after, the civil governors, and all rich and mighty men with negligence in God's business; methinks I do hear the inferior members re-

joice and flatter themselves, as if all were taken from them, and they left clear in God's sight: but if they consider their estate by God's word, they shall find small cause to advance themselves. For God's word plainly telleth us, both that evil and dumb pastors, and wicked rulers and magistrates, are sent of God, as a plague and punishment for the sins of the people; and therefore, both Isaiah and Hosea, after the most terrible threatenings of God's vengeance for sin, bring it in as a most grievous plague of all, that even the priests which should call them from sin, shall become as evil as the people. Which plague St. Bernard said in his time was come with a vengeance, for because the priests were much worse than the people. And Amas, as a most grievous punishment of all other, threateneth hunger, not of bread, but of hearing God's word. And concerning the civil magistrates, it is plain in Job, that for the sins of the people God raiseth hypocrites to reign over them; that is to say, such as have the bare names of governors and protectors, and are indeed destroyers, oppressors of the people, subverters of the law, and of all equity.

And seeing it is so, so many as feel the grief and smart of this plague, ought not to murmur against other; but patiently suffer, and be offended with their own sins, which have deserved this scourge, and much more; and study for amendment, that God may take it away. For if they continue as they do to murmur against God and their rulers, as the Israelites did, to provoke daily his anger by multiplying sin in his sight, with envy, malice, deceit, backbiting, swearing, fornication, and with utter contempt of his word; he shall for their punishment so multiply the number of evil governors, unjust judges, justices, and officers, that as it was spoken by a jester in the emperor Claudius's time, the images of good magistrates may all be graven in one ring.

God hath cause greatly to be displeased with all

estates. When every man should look upon his own faults to seek amendment, as it is a proverb lately sprung up, "No man amendeth himself, but every man seeketh to amend other," and all the while nothing is amended. Gentlemen say, the commonalty live too well at ease, they grow every day to be gentlemen, and know not themselves: their horns must be cut shorter, by raising their rents, by fines, and by plucking away their pastures.—The mean men, they murmur and grudge, and say, the gentlemen have all, and there were never so many gentlemen, and so little gentleness: and by their natural logic you shall hear them reason, how improperly these two conjugata, these yoke fellows, gentlemen and gentleness, are banished so far asunder: and they lay all the misery of this commonwealth upon the gentlemen's shoulders.—But alas, good Christians, this is not the way of amendment: "If ye bite and devour one another," as St. Paul saith, "take ye heed lest ye be consumed one of another."

Histories make mention of a people called Anthropophagi, eaters of men, which all men's hearts abhor to hear of, and yet alas, by St. Paul's rule, England is full of such man-eaters. Every man envieth another, every man biteth and gnaweth upon another with venomous adders' tongues, far more noisome than any teeth. And whereof cometh it? Covetousness is the root of all; every man scratcheth and pilloeth from other; every man would suck the blood of other; every man encroacheth upon another. Covetousness hath cut away the large wings of charity, and plucketh all to herself; she is never satisfied; she hath chested all the old gold in England, and much of the new; she hath made that there was never more idolatry in England than at this day; but the idols are hid, they comenot abroad.—Alas, noble prince, the images of your ancestors graven in gold, and yours also, contrary to your mind, are worshipped as gods; while the poor

lively images of Christ perish in the streets through hunger and cold. This cometh when covetousness hath banished from amongst us Christian charity; when, like most unthankful children, we have forgotten Christ's last will, which he so often before his passion did inculcate, "Love one another."

And herein we shew ourselves worse than any carnal sons; be they never so unkind, yet alway they remember the last words of their earthly parents. Nay rather I may say, we are much worse than the brute beasts: of whom, when we consider how wonderfully nature hath framed them to concord and unity, to preserve and help one another of their own kind, it may make us utterly to be ashamed. The harts swimming, with much pain bear up their heads in the water; for the remedy whereof, every one layeth his head upon the hinder part of another: when the foremost, having no stay, is sore weary, he cometh behind, and thus every one in his course taketh pain for the whole herd.—If men, endued with reason, would learn of these unreasonable creatures this lesson, to help one another, as we are commanded by St. Paul, saying, "Bear ye one another's burthen, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ," how soon then shall charity, the bond of perfection, which seeketh not her own, but rather to profit others, be so spread among all degrees, that our commonwealth shall flourish in all godliness? But alas! we see that all goeth contrary. For while all men, as St. Paul saith, "seek the things that be their own, and not other men's, not things which appertain to Christ," self-love, and love of private commodity, hath banished charity, and love to the commonwealth.

And if we should seek the cause and ground of all these evils, why God's business is so neglected among all estates and degrees, I think it would appear to be ignorance of his will. For if Mary and Joseph, so godly and devout a couple, understood

not for a time Christ's saying, "Wist ye not that I must go about my Father's business?" as St. Luke saith, "they understood not that saying," what marvel is it, if we, living so carnally, and drowned in worldly pleasures, and framed to the shape of this world, be ignorant in our heavenly Father's business, and therefore cannot well apply it? But shall we think this to be very strange? Many apply not God's business nor his will, which yet would disdain to be counted ignorant therein. But undoubtedly, good Christians, it is an infallible verity, that negligence in performing God's will cometh of ignorance. It is all one to know God and his will; and St. John saith plainly, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God." For if he do know God, he cannot but love him; and love is always occupied in God's business.

By this rule St. Augustine proveth, we cannot keep the first precept perfectly, to love God, so well as we ought to do while we are in this mortal life: for all our love cometh of knowledge, but in this life our knowledge is imperfect. And thus St. Augustine's rule, grounded upon St. John, is true, "That so far as we do know God, so far we love him; and so they that love him nothing at all, they know him nothing at all, although they seem to have never so much windy knowledge, puffing up their stomachs with presumption," as the apostle saith, "Knowledge maketh a man swell:" so that if a man hath studied the Scripture all his life long, and learned the whole Bible by heart, and yet have no love, he is ignorant of God's will. The poor man that never opened book, if the love of God be shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, overcometh him in the knowledge of God's will. The godly Pembus, of whom we read in ecclesiastical history, when he was first taught the first verse of the thirty-ninth psalm, "I have said, I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not in my tongue," refused a long time to take out a new lesson, judging his first lesson to be un-

learned, till he could perfectly practise it by an holy conversation. So ought we always to make our account to have learned God's word, only when we have learned charity and obedience.

But this knowledge, though it lack in many learned, yet ordinarily it cometh by hearing God's word, "Faith cometh of hearing, and hearing of the word of God," Wherefore, as I said, their case is to be lamented, which would gladly hear God's word, and can have no preachers. Then may we say, God hath abundantly poured his grace among us, that have his Gospel so clearly set forth unto us, and have such opportunity, that there wanteth nothing but ears to hear: we must have ears to let it sink into our hearts. But, O men, thrice unhappy, and children of greater damnation, if we harden our hearts, and receive such abundance of grace in vain. "The earth," saith St. Paul, "which after the rain bringeth forth thorns and briars, is reprov'd, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."

Would God all that be in the court, that will not vouchsafe (having so many godly sermons) to come forth out of the hall into the chapel to hear them, would remember what a heavy stroke of God's vengeance hangeth over all their heads that contemn his word; and over those in all places, which had rather be idle, and many times ungodly occupied in wanton and wicked pastimes, than come to the church; profaning the sabbath day, appointed for the service of God, and the hearing of his word, bestowing it more wickedly than many of the Gentiles. Yet if they would come to the sermons, though their hearts were not well disposed, God's word might win them, as St. Augustine was won by the preaching of St. Ambrose, when he came only to hear his sweet voice and eloquence. O that they knew what dishonour they did to Christ, that esteem him so light, to prefer vain, nay, I say wicked things, to the hearing of his holy word. Are not these they, as St. Paul saith, "which tread under foot the son of

God, count the blood of his Testament, wherein they are sanctified, an unholy thing ; and do despite to the Spirit of Grace ?" O Lord, how canst thou hold thy hands from punishing this unthankfulness ? Certainly I think all other wickedness, compared to this, is shadowed, and seemeth to be less.

I would to God we would remember many times the plagues and tokens of God's extreme wrath that came upon the Jews, when first unthankfully they rejected Christ, and after his word ; when they were destroyed by Titus and Vespasian, such a plague as never came upon any other country. And look on their vices ; there reigned avarice, ambition, pride, extortion, envy, adultery ; but these reigned also in other countries about, where no such vengeance did light : but then did God thus exercise his wrath upon them to the terror of all other, for contempt of his holy word, and for their unthankfulness ; which being called so many ways by his prophets, by himself, by the apostles, still hardened their hearts : this exceeded all other wickedness in the world. Now if as great unthankfulness be found in many of us towards Christ and his Gospel, set forth so plainly unto us, how can we, without speedy repentance, but look for the terrible stroke of vengeance. " God (saith Valerius Maximus) hath feet of wool ; he cometh slowly to punish, but he hath hands of iron ; when he cometh, he striketh sore."

Philip, king of Macedonia, hearing of one in his kingdom, which refused most unthankfully to receive a stranger, (of whom before he had been succoured in shipwreck) in extreme need ; for a worthy punishment, caused to be printed in his forehead with an hot iron, these two words, " *Ingratus hospes,*" an unthankful guest. O Lord, if we consider when we were strangers from God, in the shipwreck of sin, how mercifully Christ hath delivered us, and borne our sins upon his body ; if after all this, we most unthankfully refuse to receive him, by

refusing his word, may we not think ourselves worthy many hot irons to print our unthankfulness to our shame? And undoubtedly, so many as continue thus unthankful, though it be not written in their foreheads, to put them to worldly shame, yet shall it be graven in their conscience, to their everlasting confusion and damnation, when "the books of every man's conscience shall be lain open," as Daniel saith. Their judgment shall be more strait than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Let us all then from the highest to the lowest, pray with one accord, that God may soften and prepare our hearts with meekness, and humility, and thankfulness, to embrace his Gospel, and his holy word; which shall instruct us in his holy will, and teach us to know his business, every man in his vocation, "that, as St. Paul saith, every man may give attendance to themselves, and to the flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers, to feed the congregation of God which he hath purchased with his blood," that all ravenous wolves may be turned to good shepherds. So that Christ's ministers may enjoy the portion assigned for the Gospel; that all magistrates and governors may give their whole study to the public weal, and not to their private wealth; that they may be maintainers of justice, and punishers of wrong; and that all inferiors may live in due obedience, meekly contenting themselves every one in their vocation, without murmuring or grudging; that under Christ, and our noble prince, his minister here on earth, we all being knit together with Christian charity, the bond of perfection, may so fasten our eyes upon God's word, that it may continually be a lantern to our feet, to guide our journey through the desert and dark wilderness of this world, that our eyes be never so blinded with shadows of worldly things, as to make us embrace life, deceitful and temporal felicity, for that which is true, steadfast, and everlasting; that this candle, which shineth now, as St. Paul saith, "as

through a glass darkly," when that which is imperfect shall be taken away, may present us to that clear light, which never is shadowed with any darkness; that we may behold that blessed sight of the glorious Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom be all praise, all honour, and glory, world without end.

THE END.

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